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Herpetological Lore from the Blue Ridge

By H. P. BECK

When one reads that Lucifer took the form of a serpent to tempt Eve, one is sometimes forced to wonder, to which species did he do the greatest disservice? Certainly from the dawn of written history (and undoubtedly before that) the reptile and man have waged a constant and almost world wide conflict, with man the aggressor, but not always the victor.

Eden was not the only place to which the serpent brought dismay, nor Eve the only person. The Greeks saw an omen in the serpent and the eagle; England witnessed a bloody fray which cost King Arthur his life when an adder bit a knight. An asp killed Cleopatra, and King Stephen put his enemies into pits where they were "stung" to death by snakes. St. Patrick, on the other hand, won his fame by ridding Ireland of snakes—the last one to leave being encased in a gold cage and deposited on the bottom of the sea, from which durance it will be released by St. Patrick himself when "Tomorrow comes."

From these few cursory remarks we can trace the age and variety of herpetological lore in Europe and Asia Minor, and without resorting to dragons—which all of us know are the ignorant superstitions of the folk—we can still paint a fairly large canvas depicting the trials and tribulations of man in the coils of reptiles. So great is the believed ability of snakes that a man like Munchausen was chary with his snake stories. He realized, as all good tall storytellers do, that in order to be proficient in this art, everyone must realize that you are lying like truth. He foresaw that no whopper that he could make up would be disbelieved. His audience would always say, "Bah, any good snake could do that and more." Actually, what we, as *laymen*, know about snakes is mostly a collection of tall tales based on fallacious reasoning, improper observations, and old wives' tales.

This brings up an interesting question. Why do we have so much snake lore and why is it so old? The answer resolves itself, in part, around the physical properties of the creatures themselves. Of all living things, snakes are the most abnormal. They lack legs, and they move all over. They hear with their tongues, which are oddly shaped. They are gaily colored, but hard to see. They are cold-blooded. They lack eyelids. In the winter they may be brought indoors as sticks, only to thaw out and spring into action. They move

faster than other animals. Many have an unpleasant aroma. They don't "die right." They appear to have little economic value. It is often difficult to tell a venomous species from a non-venomous variety. They are silent, yet can make a peculiar noise, and their lethal properties do not depend on their size. Finally, they do not appear to fear man. The safest thing a man can do is avoid contact with them or, when contact is made, strike quickly and perhaps avoid being bitten. These perhaps were the reasons that the serpent was chosen by the writers of the Bible as a bad actor—this plus the fact that other beliefs current at the time held him in the same bad light. Once religious doctrine held the serpent as the Evil One, his plight became even more pitiable.

The European, by and large, has always been a poor observer of nature and, of all peoples, seems to get along least well with his natural environment. About the only thing that the ordinary white man seems to observe is that which has a practical and economic value to himself. The logger recognizes only those trees that are worth cutting. Other varieties, to him, are but dwarfed or twisted members of the same species. The trapper learns of the paths and foods of the creatures he wishes to catch, but knows nothing of their social habits. For example, I have been assured that a black bear will kill a cow, simply because it will eat rotten beef steak. Because one coyote kills a chicken, chickens are considered the main dish in all coyotes' diets. Since snakes have little economic value in themselves and since the European has been taught to fear them, little time is spent in examining them—even by those who are in close contact with them.

One more feature to be added to the list that helps to make snake lore both so fantastic and abundant is to be found in the fact that we are prone to give a dog a bad name. Once the premise is firmly established that snakes are wicked and extraordinary things, then people are willing, nay almost eager, to learn of more wicked and more outlandish species and abnormal characteristics of the group as a whole. A man would be far more apt to believe that his nine-year-old son saw a snake walking down the mountain balancing an egg on its nose—an utterly impossible feat—than he would if the child said he had seen a man walking up the mountain on his hands—by no means an impossibility, providing the individual were muscular enough.

The following reptile lore collected in Rappahannock County, Virginia in 1948 is probably known—at least in part—to every individual. Yet it is interesting either because of its antiquity, its wide

dispersion, faulty observation and fallacious reasoning, or because it should survive in our present, modern society. In some instances highly educated people actually believe implicitly that many of the things put down here as false are true.

In the region under discussion only eight varieties of snake were recognized by informants. They are, in order with their characteristics and principal properties, as follow:

The bastard snake is a harmless creature. It is the butt of some humor (probably because of its nomenclature) and derives its name from the fact that it has a series of different colored bands around its body.

The bull snake, not to be confused with *Compsosoma corais*, is a very dangerous, beautifully colored and rare variety. Sometimes it attains a diameter of fourteen inches and an extreme length of fourteen feet. Further, it can stand up on its tail and assume a posture like a street lamp. It derives its name from the fact that it bleats like a bull calf. About ten years prior to the time this collection was made, a small one was killed on a rock pile near Chester's Gap, where the principal informant lived.

The black snake, so named for its color, is the possessor of many remarkable qualities. Considered venomous, it also has the ability to stand on its tail, do somersaults, milk cows (who low for it as for a calf). For diversion it chases people, charms birds and children, and finally by the clever use of herbals, is able to kill rattlesnakes. Fabled in song and story, about the only thing it can't do is play music.

The hoop snake is a creature which carries its sting in its tail. This appendage is about one-half an inch thick at the butt and is equipped with a sharp horn about two inches long. It derives its name from the fact that it puts its tail in its mouth and rolls in pursuit of people, whose only hope of escape lies in flight more rapid than that of their pursuer. So terrible is its rage and so deadly its venom, that when its prey eludes it, it stings trees (especially beeches) out of spite, which instantly wither and die.

The horned snake is another poisonous variety of reptile which is equipped with a horn on each end. Although of nondescript color, some of the more enterprising members of this species sport two horns on their heads. All are small, and all sting with the tail.

Both the copper-head moccasin and the rattlesnake are considered highly dangerous and are named for obvious properties. Because it is sluggish, the copper-head is not considered so dangerous as the rattler, but its poison, though slower acting, is said to be quite as sure. Of these two, the rattler has the more interesting property. It can

only spring from a coil, at which time it leaves the ground entirely and leaps its length. (Actually it does not leave the ground and can spring only about one third its length.) As with all venomous reptiles, when these two strike they inflict a wound into which they "blow" green venom from tubes. However, it is believed that if you remove the fangs from these snakes they are slightly less dangerous than formerly.

The final variety of reptile to be recognized in this area is the striped or garter snake. These creatures are considered non-poisonous. They have the remarkable ability of laying eggs which hatch into young of all different colors and sizes, to whom they show considerable mother love, swallowing them for protection when danger threatens.

These eight varieties are the entire recognized snake family living in an area where there actually are many times the number of snakes mentioned. Further, of the eight varieties mentioned, three, the bull, the hoop and the horn snake, are apocryphal, as are the major feats of all. Why are there so few recognized types and why are their properties so apocryphal? The answer to these questions lies in faulty observation and in the willingness of the folk to believe anything dealing with snakes.

The reason why there are so few recognized species is that no one takes the time to identify the creatures they see carefully. The informants state blandly that garter snakes have various colored and shaped young. What the informants saw were clusters of small garter snakes (to use a group word) who are known for their sociability. Since all are living together, it is assumed by the unobservant that all are the same kind instead of being ten or fifteen different varieties. Were such fallacious observations carried out in other fields, one would believe the barnyard hen capable of reproducing ducks, geese, pheasants, and quail merely because she hatched the eggs. By the same token, all dark colored reptiles are believed to be black snakes; all snakes equipped with a rattle are rattlesnakes instead of various subspecies. Now, what about the apocryphal varieties?

Perhaps the most logical way to dispose of the bull and horned snake is to attribute them to tales brought to this country long ago by slaves. The python of Africa fulfills the size of the bull snake admirably, and its tree climbing habit would fulfill another quality to be mentioned shortly. The rhinoceros viper (*Bitus nasicornis*), a small, deadly African snake of nondescript color whose chief bid to fame is a pair of horns jutting out of its head, seems to qualify as the parent of the horn snake.

The problem of the hoop snake is more readily solved and extremely interesting. This creature has been the subject of folk tales and unnatural natural history since the days of the earliest writers about this continent. The solution of the problem was given by a man, Mr. Bumgarner in West Virginia, who pointed out that the blue racer, which is a reptile with a curiosity, will follow people. Instead of proceeding in normal fashion, it moves like an inch worm, hitching itself up in loops. To the eyes of the startled person glancing backward through his own dust, these loops might well be construed as hoops. Such a snake obviously would be believed to be dangerous. What would be more natural, therefore, than to ascribe the sight of a thunder blasted beech tree to the depredations of a hoop snake—especially when the lightning has torn a hole through the bark low down on the bole?

Unfortunately, hoop snake lore is beginning to become decadent. When asked about hoop snakes, one old gentleman stated that he had seen one. It came rolling down the mountain at a terrific rate straight at him. Just as the snake struck he leapt aside and it buried its stinger in the handle of his pick-axe. Within five minutes the handle had swelled to the point where it burst the iron of the pick.

That garter snakes can swallow their young is another example of faulty observation that dates back at least to the fourteenth dynasty in Egypt and has a world wide dispersion. The reason for this common error is simple and obvious. Many snakes lay eggs, while others give birth to their young alive (a fact not generally known). When a pregnant female is killed, young snakes are often expressed from her and crawl about helplessly, thus giving rise to the idea that she has regurgitated the little ones. Those who follow this belief can not be aware of the fact that the acid in a snake's stomach is sufficiently strong to dissolve a nail, nor do they reason that to engulf your young when you yourself are in jeopardy is a reverse of nature's protective function that would soon lead to extermination of the species. Let us now look at a few of the more interesting stories concerning these snakes.

Mr. Mahoney relates as follows, "My aunt knew a family who had a little daughter. This girl would take a cup at lunch and fill it with milk and crumble bread into it and go outside. At first they didn't pay any attention, but after a while they went to see where the girl went. She went out to the stile and sat down. By and by they saw a big black snake crawl out from under the stile and go up and eat the milk and bread. It would sit in her lap and eat the bread out

of her hand. They were very friendly together. The family didn't know what to do. Anyway they took and killed the snake and the girl got sick and pined. She naturally withered away and died. The snake had charmed her."

Again, "A farmer had a cow and one day he noticed she was kinder dry in one quarter. Then one day he noticed that one teat was bloody. Well, he didn't know what to make of it. Then he kept the cow in late one morning and she began to low like she had a calf down in the field. She kept that up every day so one day he followed her and she went down into some bushes and lowed and stood still. He came up and there was a black snake sucking at that one teat. He killed the snake and that cow like to went crazy."

A third tale, "A fellow went out squirrel hunting one day, and after a while he sat down on a hollow log. After while he heard an awful fuss inside the log. He didn't know what it was, so he set still. By and by a big black snake crawled out of that log and he looked awful sick. He crawled over and bit a weed and ate it and got better. Then he went back in the log and the fuss started again. Then he saw the black snake come out again and do the same thing he had done before and crawl back in the log and the fuss started again. It was an awful fuss. Then the black snake crawled out and ate of the weed a third time and went back in. This time after a little fuss the black snake came out of the hole all wrapped around a rattlesnake. He had killed that rattlesnake by eating the weed—snake weed."

All three of these anecdotes are common, and the teller uses a typical device employed almost always by the snake storyteller—telling the tales second hand—a device which gains for the teller some unnecessary immunity from criticism. However, let us see what can be done with these three stories. The idea of a girl with a snake lover is popular throughout the world—it is found, for example, among the Persians and the North American Indians. Among Christians the idea is aided in survival by the story of Eve, which gives it added credibility. As it stands, the story is plausible enough; the girl might have tamed a snake, been distressed when the family killed it and later died of some malady. In such a case the family, ignorant of the type of malady, would naturally blame the snake.

How to explain the cow milking episode is a problem I can not completely answer. The whole thing is quite impossible, except that a cow might low when kept indoors and also at the sight of a snake. Further, she might have scratched a teat. Beyond this, only the unbounded will to believe allows the story to exist, for a black snake's

mouth is full of needle-sharp teeth. Anyone who knew this fact and would still believe that a cow would allow a black snake to milk her could believe that she would enjoy having one teat run through a meat grinder.

Most prevalent of all beliefs about the black snake is the one that it can kill a rattler by the use of herbals. Although it is actually possible for the black snake to kill a rattler, herbals do not play any part in the operation. The above tale differs somewhat from the general story in that the engagement took place in a log. Usually the battle is waged in the open and victory actually comes to the black snake through no particular effort on his part. Although venomous and quick, the rattlesnake has but limited powers of endurance and tires easily. Further, it is highly susceptible to sun stroke. For this reason rattlers enjoy semishade. Occasionally one will wander into the open, where it will meet a black snake who is a sun worshiper at heart. The fray will begin. Since the black snake is impervious to the venom of the rattler, the rattler must depend upon hitting a vital part of his adversary with his fangs if he is to gain the victory. The snakes dart about violently. To the startled eye of the observer, the black snake appears undismayed by the wounds inflicted by its adversary. How can this be? Then the observer notices that the black snake bites a weed—actually in the heat of the moment it has struck and missed and grabbed a mouthful of grass instead of snake hide. Meanwhile the rattler has become highly excited and flays around desperately. The sun sides with the black snake and the rattler suffers an attack of sunstroke, brought on in part by the heat and in part by its own exertions, and dies.

Knowing that rattlesnake venom is deadly, the unobservant watcher is convinced that it was the weed that preserved the black snake. To prove his point he may remove the weed he thinks he saw the black snake bite and then, when he sees the black snake expire, he is convinced that it was the weed that preserved it. Actually a bite from the rattler punctured a vital organ and the black snake succumbed to its wounds.

There is one story that appears to be unique in this collection, and that is the story of the bull snake. It typifies the will on the part of the folk to believe anything, no matter what the source nor how far fetched the tale, when it concerns herpetological lore. Raymond Mahoney had the following experience when he was about ten years old. It is believed implicitly by the members of his community, and, because of it, he is the recognized authority on bull snakes in the region.

"When I was about ten years old," said Mahoney, "I was coming home barefoot with my sister. When I came to the turn of the road there was a old chestnut tree there (you can still see the stub) and I got some burrs in my feet. Well, I stopped and started to pull the burrs out when I heard a calf bleating. I looked all around, but I didn't see anything. Then I heard this thing again and it was right over my head. I looked and there was a bull snake standin' up stiff as a ram rod on the end of its tail. It was as big around as a gallon pickle jar and its body bent over at the top and then bent down again an' the head was right over my head an' its mouth was open an' it bleated. I was scared. My sister and me run for home for all we could go."

What the children saw we do not know. Perhaps there was a tree snake looking down at them from a limb. Whatever it was it was not a bull snake, but it inspired dormant memories of bull snake stories, and the thing half seen soon took on accurate proportions. When the tale was believed at home, it grew stronger in their minds, until today Mahoney is convinced that he saw a bull snake. Undoubtedly as he grows older the snake will enlarge until it becomes as big around as a pork barrel and so on.

Obviously no collection of snake stories would be complete without cures. Strangely enough whiskey (the usual folk remedy) is not considered an antidote (probably because the people have joined a religious sect that condemns whiskey in the hope that liquor money will find its way into the plate on Sunday). In all, five cures were prescribed, and none of them have any therapeutic value except psychological. The idea of cutting and applying suction to the wound was looked upon with dismay when it was mentioned.

The first cure cited was snake weed, commonly known as jewel weed, which has a leaf shaped like a snake's head, grows to a height of about three feet and bears a yellow flower. Most efficacious in the cure of rattlesnake bite, the leaf is applied to the wound or taken internally, or both.

The second, unidentified plant is a low-growing weed, perhaps the Virginia snake root, although insufficient evidence was given to identify it clearly. This, too, is used in the same manner as the first and is considered especially suited to the cure of copperhead bites.

Both of these cures probably derive their curative power from sympathetic magic wherein the patient uses something that either looks like the disease, resembles the affected member, or has some other physical compensatory value. Thus some American Indians use blood root to cure blood conditions and skunk cabbage to cure colds, believ-

ing that because the common cold affects the power of smell the ability to smell skunk cabbage will cure the cold. Since jewel weed leaves resemble the head of a snake they are felt to have special curative properties in this regard.

A third type of cure was given by Mr. Romey Pullem, who stated that, although he had never used it himself, he understood it would work. He recommended that a black rooster be decapitated and the bloody stump of the neck be applied to the bite. If the treatment was successful the feathers would all fall off the rooster. In all probability originally a negro remedy, we find that the black color of the feathers apparently has the power of neutralizing the poison, which could be construed as meaning that the lethal power of the venom was contained in its color rather than in its substance.

Kerosene was, by the majority of the informants, considered the very best kind of remedy. Always of great medicinal use among the folk as a cure-all for man and beast, snake bite is just another curative field that kerosene has conquered. Once again we find improper reasoning and faulty observation responsible for kerosene's medicinal powers. A typical sample follows.

Mr. Mahoney senior's uncle went out, one dark and rainy night, to turn his horse into the field. When he reached down to pick up the bars in the barway something pricked his finger. When he picked up the next bar he again had his finger pricked. Thinking it was a brier, he ignored the wound and went home to bed. Next morning his arm was badly swollen, and when he went to get his horse he saw a large copperhead moccasin in the middle of the barway, which he promptly killed. Realizing that this was what had bitten him the night before, he sent for the doctor, who was unable to do anything. The arm continued to swell. Finally, the uncle went to the local store and immersed the arm in a barrel of kerosene for an entire day and cured himself completely.

Again, we learn that a little girl was playing with her sisters when she was bitten by a snake. Her foot was soaked in kerosene and her life was saved thereby.

Such evidence as this could hardly be called even circumstantial. What was a copperhead doing in a barway on a rainy night. Why didn't the horse, usually sensitive to snakes, notice it or get bitten? Why did the copperhead stay there until the next day? How do we know that the kerosene had anything at all to do with reducing the swelling? These are questions that do not bother the folk in the slightest degree when talking about snakes.

A final remedy is to be found in gasoline, which can be used when no kerosene is to be had. It has some curative effect, but nothing to compare with kerosene.

Through this brief paper it has been demonstrated that, where snakes are concerned, logic and reason are far away. Science and skepticism and the new, increased tempo of modern life have made inroads into almost all branches of folklore. Faery lore is well nigh extinct. Ghost lore is becoming more and more decadent. Herbals are falling into disuse. Only two fields seem to remain undisturbed—weather lore and snake lore. These two go on, year after year, relatively undisturbed. Science and all the rest can not shake man's belief in the power of snakes. Munchausen was indeed a wise man when he realized that no lie he chose to tell about snakes could be branded as other than "rank truth."

Temple University

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THE KENTUCKY FOLKLORE SOCIETY

The fall meeting of the Kentucky Folklore Society will be held on the campus of Murray State College, Saturday, December 6, 1952. The special theme of the meeting will be "Folklore and the Teacher." The program is now being prepared, and members wishing to read or contribute papers on the special theme or on any aspect of Kentucky folklore should communicate with Professor Herbert Halpert of Murray State Teachers College, Murray, Kentucky, or with the secretary of the Society, Mr. D. K. Wilgus, the Kentucky Folklore Society, Box 206, College Heights, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Recent Folklore Research in Finland*

By Eeva Makela-Henriksson

Helsinki is the center of Finnish folklore research. There is the principal folklore archive, the best libraries and at the University of Helsinki there is a professorship in folklore as well as at present two lectureships.

ARCHIVES—SOCIETIES—PUBLICATIONS

The collection and study of folklore has been the main purpose of the Finnish Literary Society since its founding in 1831. As a result its folklore archives (address: Helsinki. Hallituskatu 1) have now few equals. There are now about 1,300,000 items of folklore:

* When *Midwest Folklore* was conceived it was the hope of the editor and the advisory board that the folklore and the folklore scholarship of the American Middle West might be shown in relation to that of the rest of the world. Vaguely the editor hoped that *Midwest Folklore* might attract contributions from foreign scholars in their specialties; and, indeed, three such articles have appeared: Professor Béla Gunda of the Ethnological Institute of the University of Hungary contributed "The Investigation of the Culture of Different Generations in Ethnology and Folklore" to Volume I, No. 2, pp. 85-90, and Professor Alexander Scheiber of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Budapest, Hungary, contributed "Sword Between Sleeping Companions" to Volume I, No. 4, p. 228 and "A Hungarian Encyclopedia of Cards" to Volume II, No. 2, pp. 93-100. But it was not until the editor entered into correspondence with Professor Richard M. Dorson that the idea of a specific series of survey articles was born.

It is impossible to give credit for the idea to any individual. When Richard Dorson returned from the International Congress of European and Western Ethnology held in Stockholm in August, 1951, he and the editor, and later President Francis Lee Utley of the American Folklore Society and Professor Stith Thompson held many a discussion and wrote many a letter which finally resulted in Professor Dorson's writing to some of the younger people whom he met at Stockholm to request survey articles on the research and allied activities in folklore and ethnology being conducted in their respective countries. Professor Dorson asked them to comment specifically upon the current situation with respect to the archives and folk museums, the collecting and atlas work, the folklore periodicals and publication series, the interests of the leading scholars, and the support of the public. The purpose, in brief, was to present a series of articles which would enable folklorists in the United States to become better oriented with the work of their colleagues abroad.

This series was initiated in Volume II, No. 1, with the article by Démétrios Petropoulos entitled "The Study of Ethnography in Greece" (pp. 15-20). It is continued in this present issue with the survey of folklore activities in Finland by Eeva Makela-Henriksson, and will be continued in the following number with an article by Brita Skre who describes folk-life research in Norway. It is hoped that the series will include further contributors, and that it will serve to promote correspondence and contacts between folklorists on both sides of the Atlantic.

W. E. R.

old runes, modern folk songs, incantations, superstitions and beliefs, traditional games, customs, lamentations, folk tales, mythic legends, aetiological legends, proverbs, sayings, riddles, and folk music. Moreover, a considerable part of the Estonian folklore collections is kept there in copies: old runes, superstitions, and beliefs. The collections suffered no losses during the war. New materials arrive each year. During 1951 thirty-two collectors sent in over ten thousand items.

The present director of the archives is Professor Martti Haavio (1899-), the acting director is Dr. Jouko Hautala (1910-), and the amanuensis is Mr. Lauri Simonsuuri (1910-). In order to make the huge collections readily useful for research, many subject catalogues are being built up. Besides the general accessions and topographic catalogues the following card catalogues with some 275,000 cards are now available: mythic legends, historical, local and war tales, aetiological legends, beliefs connected with animals, folk music, calendar customs, and folk medicine. Other catalogues are in process (e.g. fairy tales), but it is evident that scores of years will pass before all the necessary catalogues are in existence. For the collecting of folklore the archives have equipment for direct recording with a magnetophone. This year a large commercial establishment in Helsinki has donated a special automobile for this purpose. Collecting tours have been made into various parts of Finland, including the far north, and the collectors have been lucky enough to meet many gifted folk musicians, singers of old runes, and tellers of tales. The results are transferred from the magnetic tape to more permanent gramophone records in the archives' own laboratory. There are now about 450 records and the number is rapidly increasing. To advise the public is of course one of the duties of the staff. The archives are being used in the regular university teaching, and seminary exercises are held there. Information and copies of the materials are sent to foreign scholars.

In 1949 the Parliament of Finland voted to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the second, and definitive, edition of the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, by Elias Lönnrot, and granted a sum of ten million marks to the Finnish Literary Society. Part of this allotment was used for a complete overhauling of the archives' rooms in the house of the Society, and they are now in fine shape.

The Finnish Literary Society has published collections and studies of folklore in its long series of *Toimituksia* and in its yearbook *Suomi*, which is at present issued irregularly. Another society is the *Kalevala-Seura* (Kalevala-Society) which was founded in 1919 to take care of the traditions and research connected with the *Kalevala*. Its

yearbook *Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja* which has since then been regularly published contains hundreds of scholarly articles on *Kalevala* and on folklore and ethnography generally. The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters has published since 1909 the well-known series *FF Communications* (*Folklore Fellows Communications*). It is to be observed that the international association of Folklore Fellows has not for years had other existence than as the editorial board of the said series. Many volumes of this series have been published since the war. The Finno-Ugrian Society has since 1883 been concerned with the linguistic and ethnographic research of Finno-Ugrian and Asiatic—mainly Turkish and Mongol—peoples. The society owns much material collected before the First World War and its publication is well on the way in the series *Mémoires*, *Lexica* and *Journal*. Since 1945 large volumes of Lapp, Samoyed, Mordvine, Tchuvass, and Vogul folklore have appeared. The texts are edited in original wording and in a German translation.

Other periodicals where one can find contributions on folklore research are *Virittäjä*, which is devoted mainly to Finnish philology, and *Kotiseutu*, which is the organ for local history and ethnography. Important for foreign scholars is the series *Studia Fennica*, *revue de linguistique et d'ethnologie finnoises*. The articles are in French, English, or German. The *Studia Fennica* are published irregularly; the latest volume published was V in the year 1947. A regular feature in this publication is a "Finnische linguistische und volkskundliche Bibliographie" compiled by Dr. Sulo Haltsonen, who supplies also Finnish materials for the international *Bibliographie des arts et traditions populaires*.

The collections of the folklore of the Swedish speaking inhabitants of Finland (of the four million people in Finland about 350,000 are Swedish speaking and feel themselves as a separate nationality, distinct both from the Finns and from the Swedes in Sweden) are centered in Finland's old capital, Turku (Swedish name Abo). The Swedish University at Abo has an Institute of Nordic Ethnology (address: Abo, Abo Akademi) and there are preserved the institute's own collections as well as the folklore collections of the Swedish Literary Society, which was founded in 1885. One may guess that these Swedish collections, which comprise also Esthonian-Swedish materials in copies, are existent in a quantity of one-tenth of the Finnish collections. The collecting among the Swedish speaking Finns is almost finished. The editing in printed form of these collections is an ambitious plan of the Swedish Literary Society and one which is already realized to a large extent. The series *Finlands Svenska Folkdiktning*

is to be published in ten volumes, some of them in several parts. Since 1917 seventeen parts consisting of fairy tales, local traditions, sayings, folk songs, folk dances, beliefs, and sorcery have been published, among the latest a large volume of riddles in 1949. The Institute has its own periodical *Budkavlen*, which contains general ethnographical and occasional folkloristic articles.

OLD RUNES

The old runes have always fascinated the Finnish scholars. Now, after many years of toil and effort, there is an excellent foundation for their research as all the old Finnish runes have now been published by the Finnish Literary Society. This is the work *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* in fourteen sections filling up thirty-three large volumes. The first part was issued in 1908 and the final part in 1950. There are, all in all, 85,000 runes, counting all variants, in this publication. The late professor of folklore at the University of Helsinki, Dr. Väinö Salminen (1880-1948) contributed greatly to the completion of this edition. Among his other works we should mention a book on *Kalevala* for the large public *Kalevalakirja*, which was published in a second edition in 1947.

His successor, Dr. Martti Haavio, has in the last years devoted himself to the study of the old runes. His book *Püspa Henrik ja Lalli* (1948) is a penetrating study of the medieval rune, known in many variants, telling the story of Finland's first bishop and his murderer. In his following book *Väinämöinen* (1950) he tries to explain the origin and character of the central figure of the old runes of Väinämöinen, the great singer. The study is based not only on old runes, but also on international hero tales and folk beliefs. The book will this year be published in the series *FF Communications* in an English translation. Now he has turned his attention to the formal characteristics of the popular poetry. According to the common opinion the Finnish runes and songs are of an amorphous construction and they have been accordingly edited in long columns without any divisions. But according to Haavio the Finnish poems have a strophic structure. As the first result of his studies he published in February this year a collection of lyrical poems *Laulupuu*. In its postscript he writes: "Our lyrical poems are not arbitrary masses of verses of various length, but they have been composed according to their own poetic laws like Japanese tankas, or Scandinavian enstrofings, or Italian sonnets The Finnish popular poetry cannot be said to be primitive, or of some quite peculiar character The poets who made them were masters of poetical form." Professor Haavio is now

preparing another collection of Finnish epic poems according to the same principles. This new analysis of form is a complement to the standard research method of the old runes, the so-called verse analysis. The older method seeks to edit the original form of a poem, which is preserved to us by scores of later and often badly garbled variants, and to determine the historical and topographical development of that poem. Haavio's new findings made quite a sensation and the discussion received considerable newspaper attention.

Other scholars studying the old poems have been Dr. Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (1901-1951), who spent her last years on research on our medieval ballads and legends. She published a book *Inkerin virsi* in 1943, and she left a large work on the so-called Ritvalan helkavirret, which are a collection of ballads of dramatic character sung at a Whitsuntide festival. This work will be seen through the press by her husband. Her book *Pankame käsi kätehen* (1949) deals with the question of how the old runes were performed, a matter that has given place to some discussion.

Dr. Jouko Hautala, lecturer at the University of Helsinki, has written two books, *Lauri Lappalaisen runo* (1945), and *Hiiden hirven hiihdäntä* (1947), which are specimens of the traditional verse-analysis of poems. He will soon publish a short survey of the history and methods of the Finnish folklore research as applied to the study of the old runes. Dr. Matti Kuusi (1914-) another young lecturer at the University, presented as his dissertation *Sampo-eepos* (1949, with a German summary) another analysis of a particular poem, which the author calls typological analysis.

The Finnish national epic *Kalevala* has perhaps been in the background as an object of research, since scholars have preferred the original poems as noted down by the collectors. Dr. Väinö Kaukonen (1911-) has investigated the origin of *Kalevala* by comparing verse by verse Lönnrot's original materials, which he fortunately preserved, and the epic which he edited from his various materials. This book *Vanhan Kalevalan kokoonpano* was published in two parts, the first in 1939, the second in 1945. The result of many years of toil has been Dr. Aimo Turunen's (1912-) *Kalevalan sanakirja* (1949) which is a dictionary of *Kalevala*, giving explanations in Finnish of all words in *Kalevala* whose meaning is not immediately evident to present-day readers. The word articles contain also some etymological information, which is the more needed as an etymological dictionary of the Finnish language is still being made.

FOLKTALES

Finnish research on fairy tales (Märchen) has enjoyed the attention of great figures like Kaarle Krohn and Antti Aarne, but at present this branch of folklore research is at a standstill. The latest work has been Martti Haavio's *Kettenmärchenstudien I-II* (1929-1932) in the series *FF Communications* 88, 99. On the other hand the study of local traditions (*Sage*) is of recent origin in Finland. In 1935 the Finnish Literary Society as part of the secular celebrations of the first edition of *Kalevala* organized a general competition to collect local traditions. The promoter of the idea was Martti Haavio who published in the same year the book *Suomalaisen muinaisrunouden maailma*, in which examples of our local traditions are for the first time presented. The results of the competition were very encouraging: over one hundred thousand recordings of local traditions were received from all parts of Finland. Mr. Lauri Simonsuuri has published two large volumes of traditions *Myytilliset tarinat* in 1947 and *Kotiseudun tarinoita* (*Historical Tales*) in 1951. Both these volumes are part of an ambitious new venture: to publish the most important sections in the archives of the Finnish Literary Society in a series of some fifteen volumes with the serial title *Suomen kansan henkinen perintö*. His book *Kansa tarinoi* (1950) contains short essays of a popular character on the traditions. Up to the present the results of research in this field are to be found only in various periodicals. A collection of Finnish legends *Suomalaisia legendoja ja rukouksia*, edited by Martti Haavio, was published in 1946.

PROVERBS

The study of proverbs and popular sayings has for a long time been meager. In the 1930's collecting took great strides, and with the help of student associations some one and a half million sayings were recorded and sent to the archives of the Finnish dialect dictionary, which are kept in the house of the Finnish Literary Society. These archives with some three million word slips have been built up during the past fifty years and are of great linguistic and also of ethnographic and folkloristic importance. No parts of the dictionary proper have yet been published, and it is already evident that the whole of these collections can never be edited and published. A selection of proverbs and sayings of a popular appeal, *Suomen kansan sananparsikirja*, was published in 1948.

RIDDLES

Riddles have not aroused much scholarly interest of late. A popular collection of riddles, *Suomen kansan arvoituskirja*, edited by Martti Haavio and Jouko Hautala, with a learned introduction by the former, has, however, been sold in three editions after the war.

FOLKMUSIC

The grand old men of folk music research in Finland are Ilmari Krohn (1867-) and Otto Andersson (1879-). The leading younger scholar is Dr. A. O. Väisänen (1890-) who published in 1948 a collection *Mordwinische Melodien* in the Mémoires-series of the Finno-Ugrian Society. One might mention that the Finnish popular music has been published in five volumes (nine parts) in the years 1886-1933.

FOLKGAMES

A specialist of Finnish folk games was Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio, whose dissertation was entitled *The Game of Rich and Poor* (1932, *FF Communications* 100). She wrote later many an article on these games.

MYTHOLOGY

The Finnish popular beliefs are a rich and fascinating field of study. The master of these studies was the late professor Uno Harva (1882-1949) formerly known as Uno Holmberg. His last work was *Suomalaisten muinaisusko* (*The Mythology of the Finns*) in 1948. Professor Haavio has been productive also in this field. His book *Suomalaiset kodinhaltijat* of 1942 is an investigation of household spirits. Later on he studied the beliefs connected with the dead. The incantations and superstitions, large collections of which have been published, have been the specialty of Dr. A. V. Rantasalo (1881-). In 1945-47 he published *Der Weidegang im Volksaberglauben der Finnen* in two volumes (*FF Communications* 134-135). We might mention also that the late orientalist Knut Tallqvist published a large study of international moon-lore in Swedish in 1948, *Manen i myt och dikt, folktro och kult.*

CALENDAR CUSTOMS

Calendar customs and weather lore were published in 1948 by Jouko Hautala in a large volume *Vanhan kansan merkkipäivät*. A

popular and witty study of these customs *Vuotuinen ajantieto* was published in 1950 by Kustaa Vilkuna (1902-) who is the present holder of the chair of ethnography at the University of Helsinki.¹

From the foregoing one might assume that the position of folklore research in Finland is in all respects excellent. There are, however, many economic hindrances. The work of the Finnish Literary Society is handicapped by inadequate funds. There are very few posts for scholars and much of the work done is made by an unselfish effort without any monetary reward. Thus it comes, too, that very few of the scholarly results can be translated into English or other internationally known languages. On the other hand the scholarly activities are supported by the warm interest in folklore among the general public all over the country. And the facts that the huge collections of folklore, unharmed by the war, are centrally and easily available for the scholars and that the research methods have slowly gained stability from one generation to another, promise well for the future of these studies in Finland.

Helsinki, Finland

¹At least one copy of most of the publications mentioned, books as well as serials, should be available in America. As a part of a large book exchange programme the University Library at Helsinki has sent them to the Library of Congress in Washington.

THE OHIO FOLKLORE SOCIETY

The annual fall meeting of the Ohio Folklore Society will be held at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, on Saturday, November 8, 1952. The following program has been arranged: 11:00 Open house at the folklore archives in the Library and songs of southeastern Ohio sung by Bruce Buckley of Indiana University; 12:30 Luncheon at the New England Kitchen in Oxford (reservations should be made by writing to Professor John Ball, Department of English, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, before November 1); 2:00 interpretation of field materials by Ruth Ann Musick, Secretary-Archivist of the West Virginia Folklore Society; 2:25 a performance of Woody Guthrie songs by Dave Crook, folklorist and radio singer from Lancaster, Ohio; 2:50 a paper on the problems of the local society today by Dr. Tristram P. Coffin; 3:10 recommendations of the OFS Membership Committee presented by Professor E. L. Kirkpatrick; and 3:20 a brief business meeting.

Negro Lore in Southern Illinois

By GRACE PARTRIDGE SMITH

As far as I can determine, little, if anything, has appeared in print on the folk-beliefs of the Negro in Illinois,¹ particularly in the southern portion of the state popularly known as "Egypt."² However, here rather than in any other part of Illinois, the investigator of Negro beliefs, practices, superstitions, and other types of lore might find a rich field for his efforts and, undoubtedly, satisfactory rewards. With a sincere objective and well-considered contacts, it is likely that a collector might with good luck pick up remnants of native African tradition and certainly much lore that has been introduced into Negro culture through his long-time sojourn in Illinois.

This forecast is based on the fact that Negroes have been in Southern Illinois for over two hundred years. It is a matter of history that Negro slaves were introduced into the lower counties of the state in 1721 to work in mines and on plantations.³ The original five hundred Negroes, first colored newcomers to the area, were augmented from time to time as the practice of slave-holding in Southern Illinois counties grew in favor and as the need for slave workers increased. During a long period of over a century, Negroes continued to be held in various conditions of servitude in certain lower counties of the state, and the last vestiges of slavery were not completely wiped out until 1847.⁴

A review of the number of Negroes in the state today together with an appreciation of the natural growth of the race during the time since their arrival on Illinois soil, suggests the possibilities for reclaiming bits of Negro lore of the past from today's informants. It will be necessary to mention only two centers where this lore may be

¹ A few items on Negro superstitions are included in *Folklore from Adams County, Illinois* (New York, 1935) by Harry Middleton Hyatt. Adams County, however, is north of that section of the state being considered in this article.

² A popular epithet for Southern Illinois. The northern boundary of Egypt is generally conceded to be an imaginary line drawn from Vincennes, Indiana, to East St. Louis, Illinois.

³ All histories of Illinois cover the beginnings of slavery in the state. For a brief discussion, see George Washington Smith, *A Student's History of Illinois* (Chicago, 1925), p. 68 and *passim*. For a presentation of servitude in one southern county, see John W. Allen, "Slavery and Negro Servitude in Pope County, Illinois," *Journal, Illinois State Historical Society*, Dec., 1949).

⁴ The Illinois Constitutional Convention of 1847, ratified and put in force in 1848, declared that "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this state except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted."

mined to indicate that possibilities for contacts with Negro informants are practically legion: Cairo, southernmost city of the state has a total population of 12,217, of which 33 percent is Negro⁵; East St. Louis, popular Mississippi gateway to Missouri, reports that of her population of 82,000, 25-30 per cent is colored.⁶

In presenting below some twenty-odd items on omens, charms, superstitions, and the like from a Negro informant⁷ in the area, the writer of this article initiates a record of Negro folklore in Southern Illinois. For convenience, the items have been loosely grouped into several folklore categories, at no point mutually exclusive. Aside from re-arrangement, no changes have been made in transcribing the somewhat hit-and-miss original furnished by the informant mentioned.

Interest in the list will center primarily, no doubt, in the fact that many of the items from the informant's notes are comparable and frequently identical with similar Negro material from southern states, thus stamping the material offered here as authentic Negro lore. For evidence of such authenticity, we may use as touchstones the findings of scholars and observers who have studied this phase of Negro life in the Deep South at first hand and have recorded the results of their research in book or journal.⁸

In scanning the list, the reader will note further that the items are similar to English and Continental lore. While recording and discussing Negro folk-beliefs in the South, Puckett continually points out such parallelisms, giving footnote citations to clinch his axiomatic observation, "The Negro South is a fossil bed of European folklore."⁹ That such similarities are no accident, the reader may be reminded that they are merely the natural results of Negro contacts with early settlers in Southern Illinois who were mainly of English, Scotch-Irish, and German stock. For comparison, items are annotated with reference to the findings of Puckett and others who have investigated the lore of the Negro. The list follows.

⁵ Advice in a letter (Jan. 16, 1952) from the Executive Secretary of the Cairo Association of Commerce, Cairo, Illinois.

⁶ Report by letter (Feb. 13, 1952) from the East St. Louis Chamber of Commerce.

⁷ Lloyd Sumner, of East St. Louis, Illinois. I am indebted to Dr. William E. Simeone, of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, for Sumner's items on Negro superstitions. The material seemed to merit discussion.

⁸ Newbell Niles Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1926); Lyle Saxon, *Old Louisiana* (New York and London, 1929); Lyle Saxon and Others, *Gumbo Ya-Ya* (Boston, 1945); Henry Goodman, ed., *The Selected Writings of Lafcadio Hearn* (New York, 1949); see pages 273-281 for Hearn's "New Orleans Superstitions," reprinted from *Harpers Weekly* (Dec. 25, 1886).

⁹ Puckett, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

GOOD AND BAD LUCK

1. *If a stray black cat comes to your house and stays there, it will bring good luck to the household.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 469.)

2. *If ammonia is put in the scrub water this will bring good luck.* (Cf. Saxon and Others, p. 146 where it is indicated that the Negro uses many mixtures for scrubbing purposes to court good luck.)

3. *If a cricket comes inside the house and you let him stay he will bring good luck to the household.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 492.)

4. *It will bring good luck if you cut an old shoe in strips and twenty-one red peppers, one teaspoon salt, two teaspoons of sulphur make a smoke out of it and carry through the house.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 235.)

5. *Burning nutmeg and sugar will keep the police away.*

6. *To burn cinnamon and sugar will keep the police from the house.* (Cf. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, III, p. 105 where spices are mentioned as a means of exorcizing demons.)

7. *It is good to accidentally spill sugar.*

8. *It is bad luck if you shake a tablecloth after dark.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 376.)

9. *If you forget something make a cross and spit into it or bad luck will follow.* (Cf. Saxon, p. 348.)

10. *It is a bad omen to borrow salt.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 453; Saxon, p. 352.)

11. *If a kerosene lamp would go out by itself without being blown out or not due to insufficient amount of kerosene, this means bad luck.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 445.)

DEATH OMENS

12. *If you sneeze at table with food in your mouth this is a sign of death.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 453 who states that this superstition is probably of African origin and that there are no English parallels. See also, Saxon and Others, pp. 67, 309-10.)

13. *The howling of a dog at night means the death of someone in the family.* (Cf. Puckett, pp. 83, 479; Saxon, p. 351; Saxon and Others, p. 67.)

14. *If a bird is flying around inside of a building, someone in the house will die.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 489; Saxon, p. 350; Saxon and Others, p. 67.)

15. *If you dream of a nude woman, this is the sign of the death of some man you know.*

TABOOS

16. *Never empty ashes after night.* (Cf. Puckett, pp. 395-396; Saxon and Others, p. 552.)

17. *Don't sweep dirt or dust from under a sick person's bed.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 334; Saxon and Others, pp. 538, 552.)

WEATHER

18. *If a horse begins to kick up or act unnatural, bad weather is coming.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 334.)

19. *If you believe that a bad storm is coming, you should go outside and drive an axe in the ground and it will split the cloud.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 320.)

SIGNS RELATING TO BODY-MEMBERS

20. *If your left eye jumps, you will be angry soon; if your right eye jumps, you will be pleased.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 448.)

21. *If your left hand itches, you will get money; if your right hand itches, you will get mail.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 451; Hearn in Goodman, p. 279.)

22. *If the left side of your nose itches, you will have company, if the right side itches, you will have man company.* Cf. Puckett, p. 449; Saxon, p. 346.)

23. *If your feet itch under the bottom this is a sign that you are going to a foreign land.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 451.)

MISCELLANEOUS SUPERSTITIONS

24. *If you bite off a butterfly's head, you will get a garment of the same color.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 325.)

25. *If you walk in a road and a rabbit crosses your path you are supposed to turn and walk backwards across his tracks.* (Cf. Puckett, p. 473; Saxon, p. 348.)

26. *If you are peeling an onion and don't want the juice of the onion to get in your eyes, hold a needle in the corner of your mouth to prevent it.*

27. *To hit a person with a broom will cause that person to be arrested.* (Cf. Hearn in Goodman, p. 276ff., for phobias connected with brooms and with sweeping; Saxon, p. 350.)

28. *To improve the flavor of a pot of soup, insert a nail for good flavor.*

Carbondale, Illinois

Additional Exaggerations from East Kentucky

By LEONARD ROBERTS

In selecting these proverbial exaggerations from East Kentucky I wish to stress the word *additional*, since those already studied (*Mid-west Folklore*, Vol. I, Nos. 1 and 3) have been in large part used also in the other end of the state. I submit these to show some insight into the way of life in the hilly, dissected third of the state, where the hills rise from choked valleys on a forty-five degree angle to sharp ridges. In these one may see reflected super-rural conditions. They have many barnyard allusions, many references to violence, to the roughness of terrain, to the struggle for survival. Whether there is more grotesque (Celtic?) imagination in them than in the typical exaggeration I leave to others to decide because of lack of evidence and from the fear that I may be accused of stretching my blanket. Versions related to those of previous listings have a reference: H for Halpert; S for Sanders.

1. I want to p--- so bad my back teeth are floating.
2. Her belly is so big you could crack a chinch on it.
3. So big-headed he could wear a wash tub for a hat.
4. Lice on his head so big they need walking canes.
5. Feet so big he has to go out to the mouth of the holler to turn around.
6. Horse so bony it would make a good quilting frame.
7. So bow-legged he couldn't hem a pig in a fence corner. (H4)
8. So crowded (with people) I had to set on my fist and r'ar back on my thumb.
9. So dark I couldn't see the back of my neck.
10. Neck so dirty you could sow a turnip patch on it.
11. So dirty [mean] it would make a preacher throw down his Bible and cuss.
12. So drunk he looked like he was walking on eggs.
13. So dumb he don't know his ass from a hole in the ground.
14. So dressed up the crease in his pants would cut you like a knife
15. So far back in the holler they have to pipe sunshine in. (H37)
16. Went so fast you could play checkers on his coat tail.
17. Went by so fast you couldn't say Howdy to him as he passed.
18. Went so fast he met himself coming back.
19. My dog is so fast he has to run sideways to keep from flying.

20. So fat she has to get out of bed to turn over.
21. So fat he can't see out of his eyes.
22. So fat he can't wipe his a--.
23. So foolish he must be drunk on ignorance and staggering on starvation.
24. So foolish he don't know the way to go to mill. [I wonder if this arose from a local incident, or is more widely used.]
25. So foolish if you put his brains in a cricket's head it would run back'ards.
26. So forgetful he would leave his hind-end if it was loose.
27. Runs so gentle [car or any machine] it sounds like a lamb a-sucking.
28. So green you could stick him in the ground and he'd grow. (H103)
29. So grumpy he don't do a thing but set in the chimley corner, rock his shoe toe, and whistle hard times.
30. Pushed (or lifted) so hard my ass tooted out like a morning glory.
31. Whup you [a child] so hard you won't need another'n till Kingdom comes.
32. Hit you so hard I'll knock you into the middle of next week.
33. Hit you so hard you'll p--- something you never drunk.
34. Times are so hard a quarter looks as big as a wagon wheel.
35. She's so high and mighty her head is in the clouds.
36. She's so high up now she won't Howdy when she passes.
37. She's so high hat it rains in her nose. (H53)
38. Mountain so high when you get to the top you're as near Heaven as you'll ever be.
39. My dog hit the trail so hot he went over the point on two legs. [i.e., the hind ones.]
40. So hungry I could draw my belly up and tie it in a knot.
41. So hungry I could eat the east end out of a west-bound pole cat. (H57)
42. So ignorant he wouldn't know beans with his head in the sack.
43. So well-known around there I could get a loan where you couldn't get breakfast.
44. So lazy he's got blisters on his hind-end big as quarters.
45. Lantern gives so little light you would have to strike a match to find it.
46. Been away so long when he comes back he'll have to throw his hat in first to see if he's welcome.
47. Tongue so loose it runs like a flutter mill.
48. So mad he was foaming at the mouth.

49. So mad his ass would clip ten-penny nails in two. (H87)
50. So many lice on his head they are thick as fiddlers.
51. So mean in his eyes he could look a hole through you.
52. Boy's so mean they'll have to salt him to keep him from sp'iling.
53. So mean I'd like to shoot him just to watch him kick.
54. So mean it's just sticking out all over him.
55. Eats so much he must not have a thing in him but one straight gut.
56. Her tongue goes so much it must be loose on both ends.
57. She's so nice she drinks perfume so her s--- won't stink.
58. So ornery he wouldn't strike a lick at a snake (if it was about to bite him).
59. Land so pore it wouldn't sprout black-eyed peas.
60. Farm so pore three thirds of it won't make corn.
61. Field so rocky you could walk from one end to the other'n and never touch the ground.
62. So run-about we'll have to put a number over the door to show him where home is.
63. So little sense if his brains was ink they wouldn't dot an i.
64. Seat of his pants so slick if a fly was to light on 'em it would slip and break its leg.
65. So slow I'd die shore if I sent you for the doctor.
66. So steep he plants his 'taters up and down the hill so he can open up the lower end of a row and let 'em roll into the sacks. (H115)
67. Road across the hill so steep you have to rough-lock [chains around them] your tom cats to get 'em over.
68. Farm so steep he has to tie two cows' tails together and throw 'em across a ridge to pick.
69. Field is so steep he's liable to fall out of it and break his neck.
70. Farm so steep he can look down the chimley and see what his old woman is fixing for supper. (H114)
71. Farm so steep he has to dig a hole behind the house for the dog to set in to bark.
72. Hill so steep when you go one step you slide back two.
73. Coffee so strong it would float an iron wedge (and eat up a horse shoe).
74. Moonshine so strong it would make a man sass his grandmaw. (H122)
75. Mountains so tall we have to grease the moon and prize her over with hand spikes.
76. Boy so tall his old man has to saw a hole in the loft so he can set by the fire. (S16)

77. People so thick you couldn't stir them with a stick. (S17)
78. People so thick you couldn't fall down.
79. Family so thrifty they make their sody out of white hen manure.
80. So tight [grasping] when he dies he'll have a mortgage on Hell in five minutes.
81. So tight you couldn't prize a nickel loose from him with a hand spike.
82. Squeeze you so tight I'll be on the other side of you 'rectly.
83. So tight when he finishes a chaw of tobaccer he lays it up to dry for his old woman to smoke.
84. So tight he climbs over his fences to keep from wearing the hinges off his gates. (H138)
85. So tight he gets out of the bed to turn over to keep from wearing the sheets out.
86. I'm so tough I s--- muscle.
87. So ugly she looks like she's been shot at and missed, s-- at and hit all over.
88. Woman so ugly he has to put a sack over her head when he sleeps with her.
89. Team so weak it couldn't pull my hat off.
90. Coffee so weak it looks like scared water.
91. Clothes so wore out I could hang 'em up and read the Lord's Prayer through 'em. (H131)
92. Gun so wore out you couldn't hit a house and you on the inside of it.

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The Humorous Yarn in Early Illinois Local Histories

By JESSE W. HARRIS

Many early compilers of local history took a very broad view of the subject and included large amounts of miscellaneous material. Much of this miscellaneous matter apparently came from oral sources. These oldtime compilers of local history obviously loved a good humorous anecdote, a practical joke, tall story, a numskull tale, or an account of trickery or deception, and many of these current tales found a place in their histories. Writers of this school, in keeping with the times, occasionally indulge in flights of rhetoric of an amusing nature,¹ as in the following description of a noted pioneer character:

He came among the early simple hunters and trappers of Union County like an Aurora in soiled linen or an unshod, burr-tailed colt from the mountain 'deestrick,' and he waked the echoes of the primeval forest, and as a politician bore down all opposition, as he rode in triumph into the affection of the voters and into high official positions.²

The Reverend W. F. Short, writing in *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1902), cited a powerful example of this type of rhetoric: "Venerable sir, the deleterious effluvia emanating from your tobacconistic reservoir so overshadows our ocular optics and so obfuscates our sensorium that our respirable apparatus must shortly be obtunded, unless, through your abundant suavity and preëminent politeness, you will disembody that illuministic tube from the stimulating and strenuatory ingredient, which replenishes the rotundity of the vastness of its concavity." This surge of words was apparently a polite way to ask a smoker to desist from smoking in the presence of the speaker.

Possibly the urge that led the frontier speaker to indulge in the kind of language illustrated above may also account for his love of boasting and for the tall tales he loved to tell. Boasting expressed his optimism and enabled him on occasion to put outlanders in their proper place. Boasting about the home country was a favorite activ-

¹ *The Standard Dictionary of Folklore*, II, 1101, explains: "Half folk, half literary, tall talk was part of the picturesque trappings of the backwoodsman, along with coonskin cap and deerskin shirt and leggings."

² *History of Alexander, Union and Pulaski Counties*, (Chicago, 1883), p. 271.

ity, and the frontier talker was often at his best here. The *History of Sangamon County* (1881) has preserved the following yarn about a local citizen of the pre-Civil War period. After listening to some strangers boast about the merits of their home districts, the Sangamon County man told them of a dream he had had in which he saw himself before the golden door of heaven: "St. Peter appeared. When he saw me, he said, in sweetest tones: 'Whence comest thou?' I said, 'From the Sangamo country, Illinois.' I shall never forget the candid and kind manner St. Peter said: 'My friend, I advise you to go back, as there is no such beautiful land in Heaven as the valley drained by the Sangamon river. By nature it is the Garden Spot of America, and by the art of man is destined to become the Paradise of the New World.'"

Illinois was indeed a rich land, and really did produce some amazing things. Researchers for the WPA Writers' Project (1940) turned up newspaper reports for the year of 1838 of a beet that measured 3 feet and 4 inches in length and 23 inches in circumference; "two bunches of celery, each 3 feet and six inches in length"; and a pumpkin that measured 6 feet and 2 inches in circumference.³ The *History of White County*, quoting from Daniel Berry's address at the Old Settlers' Meet of 1882, tells an anecdote about an old settler whose sow and pigs had been lost for six weeks one winter when he finally found them inside a giant pumpkin, bedded down for the winter.⁴ (No dimensions are given for this pumpkin.) The White County historian also quotes the following big ones from Berry:

1. I wanted to be with him (the Old Settler), up on Skillet Fork, when he cut that big tree. You know it was so large, that after he had cut on it two or three days, he concluded he would walk around it to see how big it really was, and was much surprised to find two men at work on the same tree, and they had been cutting a week. I always wanted to see that tree.

2. I wanted to be with him down in Possum, when he was plowing, and the lightning struck his horse and plow and melted the trace chains into solid rods, and came 'mighty near' jerking the plow handles out of his hands. And another time when he was plowing corn, he saw the lightning zig zagging down the corn row. I always wanted to see that side step of his to the right, when he pulled the plow out of the way and dodged the fiery ball as it went by and hit a 'pistol grubbed' white-oak sapling and 'knocked it into bug dust.'

³ *Illinois Historical Anecdotes*, p. 26.

⁴ Cf. "The Giant Pumpkin," *Treasury of American Folklore*, p. 267.

A popular type of tall tale, judging from the number of versions that have come down by oral transmission,⁵ was that of how a fast rider or driver outran the storm. Driving or riding into the home shed, the husband riding in front is dry but his wife riding behind him is soaking wet; the farmer driving in the front seat of the buggy is dry but two shoats behind the seat are drowned by the rain, etc.⁶ During the early days, a prairie fire was often substituted for the rain storm in stories of this type. The *History of Bond and Montgomery Counties* (1882) has preserved a lengthy tale of this kind, attributed to one 'Old Slaymush,' "acknowledged to be the 'biggest liar' in Bond County at that time, with but one or two exceptions, which was saying much for him in that respect, for in those early times there were some here 'hard to beat' on frontier incidents."⁷ In brief form, the story runs as follows:

Old Slaymush, mounted on his good horse, was caught by a prairie fire and forced to flee ahead of it across six miles of open prairie. After an epic ride, he fell from his horse just as he reached safe ground. Here is the conclusion of the tale:

He saw his horse standing at a distance of a hundred yards, gazing at him most intently; going up in front of the faithful animal and looking at him, he seemed unhurt—not a hair showed the least sign of having been in the proximity of the fire; for this he was thankful, as also, his own preservation—'there was not a hair of his head even singed.' He took his horse by the bridle and turned him round, when a sight presented itself that was horrible to behold. Every particle of hair and skin was burnt off his tail and hind legs, the tail itself being literally roasted. The hair was also burnt off his hips and back, as far forward as the loins, but no farther!

The old local histories often record actual happenings that to the modern reader seem as exaggerated as the acknowledged tall tales. In the fall of 1834, according to the White County chronicler cited above, vast hordes of squirrels swam the Ohio river from Kentucky

⁵ See C. Neely, *Tales and Songs of Southern Illinois*, p. 48; L. Allison, *Illinois Folklore*, (Oct., 1947), p. 15; and Grace P. Smith, *Midwest Folklore*, (Summer, 1951), p. 94.

⁶ Noel Smith, Crab Orchard, Illinois, recently told me the following variation of this story, which I give here in brief form. The rider on his fast horse is caught several miles from home by a storm—as in other versions. The rider in this tale, however, is accompanied by his faithful dog, following along at the horse's heels. Giving his horse his head, he stayed just ahead of the storm. But looking around a little later, he saw that the rain had caught up with the dog. The horse made it into the home barn ahead of the rain, and the dog swimming hard came in right behind the horse.

⁷ *History of Bond and Montgomery Counties*, (Chicago, 1882), pp. 15-16

and invaded the counties of Gallatin and White in Illinois. Around the neighborhood of Phillipstown alone, two groups of hunters killed more than 60,000 of the invading horde. Other apparently factual accounts speak in like manner of the enormous numbers of wild fowl, reptiles, and so on. Thus, any raconteur trying to equal or outdo nature really had to soar.

The rough practical joke was another common source of entertainment among our forebears. A number of these tales, some of which indicate a very lusty sense of humor, have been preserved in our local histories. From the *History of Effingham County* comes the following account of Rod Jenkins, who had bitten off a man's nose in a fight and who later had had his own nose cut off in retaliation:

One morning he rode into Ewington to spend the day, as usual, and as he came into the crowd, Dan Williams (Blue Dan) saluted him cheerfully with, "How are you, old Snip Nose?"

He paid little or no attention at the time to this salutation, but during the day Rod and Dan got into a fight, when Rod bit off Dan's nose, and then pushed him away, saying with a leer, "How are you, Brother Snip?" The whole county enjoyed the joke finely, at least nearly as well as did Blue Dan, and from this time forth the two were better friends than ever.⁸

This Rod had, says the historian, originally lost his nose in this way: He bit off a friend's nose in a fight. Some time later the friend found Rod drunk and proceeded to cut off his nose in retaliation.

The following tale also comes from Effingham County. "A party was out camping and hunting. Campbell had with him a favorite and worthless dog of the bench-leg kind—very fat, clumsy, and lazy. It was fit for nothing in the chase, so it stayed at the camp-fire with the cook while its master would be hunting. On one occasion, Campbell had been gone all day, and when he returned, tired and hungry, he anxiously inquired what luck his companions had had in killing something to eat. To his joy he saw roasting over the fire what he supposed to be an enormously large coon. Now, if there was one thing in the world that Campbell liked best of all, it was a coon, fat and cooked by a camp-fire. The coon was soon cooked to a turn, and Campbell's joy, when the others announced that they had had supper, was sincere, for he knew his capacity, and he wanted enough for himself. Without bread, potatoes, coffee, or anything else but coon, he sat down to a repast fit for a king, particularly in quantity,

⁸ *History of Effingham County*, (Chicago, 1883), pp. 67-8.

which was much in Campbell's eye. He picked a bone and called his dog, but the dog did not respond. He would pick another bone and whistle again and call his dog; the dog never came, and this went on until every bone was picked. The boys had killed and cooked the dog for a coon."⁹

Outwitting the store or 'grocery' keeper by trickery or deception seems to have been another favored source of amusement in early times. In his *Pioneer History*, John Reynolds told the following tale of this kind about John Murdoch: "At Peoria, in the fall of 1813, he provided himself with two black bottles; one he filled with water and the other he left empty. He had not much credit with the suttlers; but asked for a quart of whiskey and had it put into his empty bottle. Murdoch was slow, orderly, and circumspect in putting his whiskey under his hunting-shirt. He put the bottle containing the water where the suttler first saw him put the whiskey-bottle. In a grave, serious manner he observed to the suttler that he had no money, as he was out from home, and he must charge him with it. The suttler refused and then Murdoch offered him the bottle containing the water and said, he must put the liquor back into the barrel. The grocer did so and put the neck of the water-bottle into the bung-hole of the barrel and let the water pour in. Thus it was that Murdoch exchanged a bottle of water for a bottle of whiskey."¹⁰

Tricking the 'grocer' into buying the same coon skin several different times supplied the makings for a rather widely distributed frontier tale. The best known version of this yarn is the one found in the *Life of Colonel David Crockett*, which relates how Crockett used this trick to fool a Yankee grocer during his first campaign for Congress. "This joke," says Crockett, "secured me my election, for it soon circulated like smoke among my constituents, and they allowed, with one accord, that the man who could get the whip hand of Job Snelling in fair trade, could outwit Old Nick himself, and was the real grit for them in Congress."

Locally I have heard two oral versions of the coon-skin trick, and at least two others have been recorded in our county histories.¹¹ The *History of Bond and Montgomery Counties* (1882) gives a ver-

⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰ John Reynolds, *Pioneer History*, (Chicago, 1887), p. 239. (Cf. "Turning Water into Grog," and "Filling the Bottle," in *Treasury of American Folklore*, pp. 52 and 78.)

¹¹ Another version in Mrs. P. T. Chapman's *History of Johnson County* (1925), p. 71. See also J. W. Harris, "Myths and Legends from Southern Illinois," in *Hoosier Folklore* (March, 1946), pp. 14 ff., for other versions.

sion in which a party of men on a Christmas spree used a single coon-skin to get several bottles of whiskey from a local grocery. They used the first bottle to get the grocery keeper slightly drunk. "This was just what they wanted, and getting him 'about right,' as they expressed it, one of them slipped back where the pile of skins lay, took one and put it through a large crack in the wall of the hut, to the outside; then going out the door he went round, took up the skin, and after waiting a few minutes came in—being saluted by the others as a fresh arrival,—and presented his raccoon skin in payment for a certain amount of whiskey. This offer was readily accepted, the whiskey measured out and the skin thrown back on the heap with the rest. This feat was repeated every few minutes till they obtained all the whiskey they wanted, having actually sold the grocery-keeper his own raccoon skin six or seven times in a few hours."

The courtroom trial had a great deal of entertainment value for the older generations. A lawyer who won a case by a little honest trickery was likely to be remembered and his story told and retold by local curbstone raconteurs. An early Jefferson County historian relates an account of how a local lawyer, without much evidence to support his case for a client who was suing a railroad company for livestock allegedly killed by a train, put one over on the railroad by seizing on an unrelated item to fool the jury. This yarn is interesting because of the use it makes of the name and method of Sergeant Buzfuz, the serjeant at law made famous by Dickens in the *Pickwick Papers*. The railroad's attorney, very sure of winning his case and unaware of the jury's lack of literary information, referred to the opposing lawyer as being like Sergeant Buzfuz. The opposing lawyer, knowing the jury had no idea of the identity of Buzfuz, launched into a tear-jerking eulogy of Buzfuz, whom he pictured as a poor but noble pioneer of Jefferson County. His alleged speech concluded with these words:

In fact, gentlemen of the jury, there are few men, living or dead, that this county owes more to than it does to my old friend Sergeant Buzfuz. It is true, gentlemen, that he was somewhat uncouth and blunt in his way, but his every action, I assure you, was prompted by a noble and honest motive. He was not blessed with the brilliant and accomplished education of my young friend. He gentlemen of the jury, wore no starched shirt, or fine neckties; he was humble and retired. In his leather leggings and hunting shirt he went about the country, not as a representative of a rich railroad monopoly, but as an humble citizen doing good to his fellow-men. His bones have long since moldered into dust; the sod grows green over his grave; his work is

done, and he is gone from among us to return no more forever; and I was surprised to hear his just and amiable character attacked in the manner it has been upon this occasion; and it is impossible for me, his last remaining friend, to permit it to go by unnoticed.¹²

At the close of this speech, says the account, "... the jury could hardly wait until they could write their verdict for the full amount of damages claimed by the plaintiff"

Preachers were the subject of a good many more or less good-natured tales. Under the conditions that prevailed in those days, special training for the ministry, or even ordinary literacy, was not a prerequisite for preaching in some denominations. Occasionally this lack of preparation was so outstanding as to attract notice and eventually to become part of the local lore. How a man received the call to preach is dramatized by a local chronicler in the following selection: "Wofford was a hard-shell Baptist preacher. He claimed that he held his commission from God, and that he needed no earthly license. He was innocent of much style in dress and was as illiterate as a horse, and in the language of the boys could tell the biggest 'whopper' of any man in the State. One day, at a meeting in the woods, he rose and astonished the audience by telling them he was going to preach. He said he had been plowing in the fields, and all at once he heard a voice saying, 'Wofford! Wofford, where art thou?' And he plowed along, and again the voice of low thunder called, 'Wofford! Wofford, where art thou?' And at last he answered, 'Here's Old Worf. Now what d'ye want?' And then he ran to the woods and hid behind stumps and trees and in the brush, and the voice followed him, and then it said, 'Wofford, you must go and preach my gospel.' He obeyed the command of heaven and preached, and told the most astounding 'yarns' ever heard in this part of the State."¹³

Absurd or inappropriate conduct was sure to be noted in earlier times as now, discussed, and occasionally recorded in the local history. A Massac County historian recorded the following item of how a debate was concluded at 'Old Bethlehem' Methodist church and school in 1857: "Here in 1857 was fought a celebrated fist-fight between men on different sides of a debate. The decision was unsatisfactory. They fought until exhausted. No one was killed."¹⁴ George Flower

¹² *History of Jefferson County*, (Chicago, 1883), p. 166 ff.

¹³ *History of Alexander, Union and Pulaski Counties*, (Chicago, 1883), p. 460.

records an item from the 1820's of a man, pardoned from execution by hanging, who "claimed the coffin and the rope that was to hang him, which the county had procured for this special use. They were given to him; the former became a fixture in his cabin as a corner-cupboard, the latter as a happy memento in his rural hours."¹⁵

Courtship and marriage, also, received due attention from the local chroniclers. The Effingham County historian relates the following account of a pioneer widower who went into another part of his home county to seek a wife: "He had never seen her, but, nothing daunted, he mounted his horse and rode to her house, called her to the door, and as he sat on his horse, looking closely at the widow, he finally informed her that he had come to see her on business—that he wanted to marry her—but that *she wouldn't do*, and he turned his horse and rode off. He proceeded to another house, where there was also a widow, called her to the door, told her his business, and commanded her to mount behind him and to the magistrate's and be married. The poor woman remonstrated and begged for time; but with oaths that fairly snapped as he uttered them, he told her to mount and she mounted, and the cooing doves rode off and were married."¹⁶

CONCLUSION

The selections cited above are more or less typical of the humorous material preserved in our older local histories. They were originally part of the oral tradition and were included in these old histories because of the interest they held for local readers. "The facts," says one of these early compilers in explanation of the method used in gathering his material, "are gathered from a hundred different sources, and depend largely, not on exact written records, but on the recollections of individuals. We have tried to preserve the incidents of pioneer history, to accurately present the natural features and material resources of the county, and to gather the facts likely to be of most interest to our present readers, and of greatest importance to coming generations." Histories of this type were compiled almost exclusively for a reading audience in the area covered by the book. And such humorous matter as the compiler elected to include would be that which local people had found sufficiently interesting and enter-

¹⁴ O. J. Page, *A History of Massac County, Illinois*, (Metropolis, 1900), p. 65.

¹⁵ George Flower, *History of the English Settlement in Edwards County*, (Chicago, 1882), p. 140.

¹⁶ *History of Effingham County*, (Chicago, 1883), p. 21.

taining to keep alive by word of mouth. Even a cursory examination of the material, however, shows that these local readers knew and enjoyed the same types of humorous matter as did their contemporaries all along the frontier. The tall talk, tall tales, coon-skin deceptions, and so on, were for the most part variations on or adaptations of conventional formulas that generations of yarn spinners had used successfully.

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THE FRANK C. BROWN COLLECTION
OF NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore. ..General Editor: Newman Ivy White. Associate Editors: Henry M. Belden, Paul G. Brewster, Wayland D. Hand, Arthur Palmer Hudson, Jan. P. Schinhan, Archer Taylor, Stith Thompson, Bartlett Jere Whiting, George P. Wilson, Paul F. Baum. Illustrated by Clare Leighton. Volume I: Proverbs, Riddles, Customs, Speech, Games, Tales; Volume II: Folk Ballads; Volume III: Folk Songs. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1952). \$7.50 a volume.

Although scholars will undoubtedly find much to criticise in *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore* (at least one third of the published materials may be classified as folklore only by the loosest of definitions), its publication appears to be so significant an event that *Midwest Folklore* wishes to take notice of it in advance of reviews which will appear in a subsequent issue.

The result of some forty years of collecting by Professor Frank C. Brown of Duke University, this great mass of materials has been edited by a group of the principal American specialists in each branch of folklore; if for no other reason than this, the volumes would be worthy of note. But each section of each volume gives further claim to the attention of all who are interested in folklore. This is certainly the most important publication in American folklore since the publication of the *Standard Dictionary of Folklore*.

American Name Society

THE AMERICAN NAME SOCIETY was formed at Detroit, Michigan, in December, 1951, for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the study of geographical, personal, scientific, commercial, and other names. The Society will endeavor to make the American people conscious of the interest and importance of names in all fields of human activity, and will be ready to act in an advisory capacity to institutions, organizations, and individuals concerned with names.

To anyone who has ever worked with names in this country the need for such a society has long been evident. The bibliography of published materials about names is not nearly so long in the United States as it is, for instance, in Scandinavia or England, but it is extremely difficult to come by any comprehensive list of materials because the studies which have been made have been published in all sorts of journals and from all points of view. Here, at last, is a society which will publish its own journal and which will make it possible to gather a working bibliography quickly and accurately. Moreover, here at last is the medium by which the researches of scholars actively engaged in the examination of names can be publicized.

The Society will hold annual meetings at the time and place of the Modern Language Association; it will publish a quarterly journal devoted to articles on names written by members, and it plans to publish books, monographs and, eventually, standard reference dictionaries.

The annual membership dues are: Active Member, \$5.00; Sustaining Member, \$25.00; Library, \$5.00. An individual may become a Patron or Life Member by payment of \$1,000.00. Membership dues will include subscription to the journal and the privilege of purchasing at cost other publications of the Society.

The first membership year will expire December 31, 1953, and one year's dues will keep members in good standing until that date or until the completion of the first volume of the journal. Dues and application for membership should be sent to Erwin G. Gudde, University of California Press, Berkeley 4, California.

The Black Bear and White-Tailed Deer As Potent Factors in the Folklore of the Menomini Indians

By MARTHA E. CURTIS

In 1944, the writer brought to a close certain aspects of a study of science materials of a forest Indian tribe. The Menomini Indians, a tribe of forest Algonkins, living on their reservation north of Green Bay, Wisconsin, at Keshena, had been selected for this study, because they have maintained both their tribal identity and the same approximate geographic location since first known to white man, in 1634. The study was made to determine if there was anything significant in the formal education of the forest Indian for modern elementary science teaching.

A visit to the tribe on the reservation during the summer of 1939, when older tribal authorities were interviewed and consulted, some through interpreters, provided the author with verification of many of the reference materials, and with greater insight into the reasoning behind many of the tribal beliefs.

This material on animal mythology represents an outgrowth from this earlier study of the Menomini and is an attempt to satisfy a certain curiosity regarding relationships between the material culture of the tribe and its mythology.

During the twelve years of the study, the writer was continually conscious of, and grateful for, the wealth of myths, legends, and folklore found in the works of Hoffman, Bloomfield, Densmore, Keesing, Huron Smith, Alanson Skinner, and John V. Satterlee. Often it was the mythical action of the culture hero Manabus that revealed the motive for some unusual attitude or action on the part of the tribal members.

In order to understand the position of the black bear and the white-tailed deer in Menomini life, it is necessary to delve into older tribal cosmology (Table I). The oldest Menomini beliefs divided the Universe into two portions which were separated from each other by the earth, which was placed between. The regions above the earth were inhabited by good gods, those below were the haunts of evil gods. Each of these regions was again portioned off into four tiers, and in each of these layers dwell various strong powers, those farthest from the earth exhibiting the most power. The uppermost stratum

was occupied by Matc Hawatuk, who is the nominal head of the Universe and the creator of the world and all of its inhabitants. In the tier immediately below Matc Hawatuk, in the ether above the air, lived the Thunderbirds, servants of Matc Hawatuk and friends of mankind. The next tier was in the highest heavens, but the inhabitants breathed air. Here lived the sacred swan and the golden eagles, birds of highest flight. They were the servants of the thunderbirds and their earthly representatives. In the tier below, just above the

TABLE I
MENOMINI CONCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSE
ABOVE THE EARTH

4

MATC HAWATUK—CREATOR OF EARTH AND ITS INHABITANTS
In early times, undoubtedly the Sun, later the Great Spirit.

3

THUNDERBIRDS—GODS OF WAR
Servants of Matc Hawatuk—friendly to man.

2

SACRED SWANS AND GOLDEN EAGLES
Servants of Thunderbirds and their earthly delegates.

1

BALD EAGLES
Including various hawks, kites, vultures and swallows.
Are servants of the golden eagles and thunderers.

THE EARTH

Believed to be an island floating in an illimitable ocean, peopled with a myriad of fantastic hobgoblins such as: cannibal giants, living skeletons, pygmies, flying heads and skulls. Stray horned snakes, bears, panthers, are found in swamp holes, lakes, rivers and waterfalls.

BELOW THE EARTH

1

HORNED SNAKES—bodies covered with scales, hairy heads with stag-like horns. Their servant is the dog.

2

WHITE DEER
The black cat is its servant.

3

UNDERGROUND PANTHER—with buffalo-like horns and a long tail. The white beaver, its servant; its earthly delegates, the lynx and the panther.

4

WHITE BEAR—supposed to have a burnished copper tail. The naked bear, its servant, the black bear its earthly delegate.

Compiled from the following references:
Skinner (1913, 73-85),
Skinner (1921, 28-38, 263-264)

earth, came the more ordinary birds of the air, including the bald eagle, various hawks, kites, vultures, and swallows; these were servants of the golden eagles and thunderers. The Powers Below resided in four tiers under the earth. In the lowest was found the white bear, with a brightly burnished copper tail, who was the supreme ruler of the Underneath Gods, and whose servant was a naked bear. He was patron of all earthly bear, traditional ancestor of the tribe, and the most important power for evil. Immediately above him was the underground panther, whose servant was a white beaver. Next came the white deer, whose servant was a black cat. The white deer was prominent in the origin myth of the Mitawin. Last, and nearest the earth, was the horned snake, whose servant was a dog. The earth itself was believed to be an island floating in a limitless ocean and inhabited by a myriad of weird hobgoblins. Skinner (1921, 28-33). Thus we see that each of our two animals ruled a tier of the Universe Beneath. But there is little doubt that the position of the bear is more important than that of the deer. A listing of items of ceremonial importance (Table II) with regard to both bear and deer indicates the same idea, namely, that the influence of the black bear on the ceremonial features of the tribe is greater than that of the white-tailed deer. A study of actual uses of the two animals presents a marked contrast (Table III). There are more than four times as many uses for the white-tailed deer as for the black bear.

Thus it is evident that a tribe of Indians, such as the Menomini, even though they lived in a "terrestrial paradise," were extremely dependent on the white-tailed deer, in the early days of the tribe. It is very noticeable that perhaps greater reverence, more taboos and prohibitive customs surround the black bear with a sanctity partly due to its being the totem animal of the Bear gens, which hereditarily provided the tribal chief. Perhaps it was the ever-present problem of food, clothing and shelter from the earliest times that prevented the white-tailed deer from sharing much of this reverence and sanctity. For an animal of such utilitarian value could not carry the cultural impedimenta that go with totem and taboo, such as are found in the case of the black bear, and still be of so much value as a source of food, clothing, and shelter. Curtis (1944, p. 273).

In terms of practical uses of the two animals, Wissler (1941, 243) rates the deer of first importance to Indians east of the Mississippi, and estimates the dressed weight of the deer as 100 pounds. While it would take ten deer to equal a bison in terms of pounds of edible meat, a deer would be the equivalent of many rabbits. Meat

rations for aboriginal hunters would be hard to compute at this late date; however, Wissler (1941, 242-243) tells us that fur traders fixed it at four pounds per day for each man, woman, and child in camp. Thus a band of 100 Indians would need four hundred pounds of meat a day, or an average of four deer a day. He estimates that such a band of Indians would have five to ten able-bodied hunters, and that it would mean that a hunter should bring in a deer every two or three days, indicating, as he suggests "that the Indian male was not altogether a gentleman of leisure."

It is difficult to find references concerning the comparative numbers of white-tailed deer and black bear in the locality now known as Wisconsin, for the beginning of the eighteenth century. Turner (1891, 605) stated that in 1836, long after the best days of the fur-trade, a single Green Bay firm shipped to the American Fur Company about 3,600 deerskins, and 150 bearskins, among other furs. Hamilton (1939, 353, 393) reported that, as late as 1936, 29,949 deer were killed in the state of Wisconsin, while for the whole of Canada, in 1934-35, only 1,123 black and brown pelts were reported. Bradt (1946, Nov., p. 4, 14; Dec., p. 4) wrote that about 1,000 bear were killed in Michigan in 1945, and about 100,000 deer for the same year. Wisconsin's deer kill for 1945 was 37,527. Thus it would seem entirely probable that the number of bear killed in Wisconsin, in 1700, would have been less than the number of deer. This would greatly affect the number of uses of the animal made by the Indian, as well as increase the sacredness of the bear in the eyes of the Indians.

Thus, even a brief examination of material culture sharpens the focus, and a clear picture emerges, showing a preponderance of ceremonial emphasis in the case of the Black bear, more or less balanced by extensive utility, in the case of the white-tailed deer. Will a study of Menomini myths corroborate these findings?

TABLE II
THE INFLUENCE OF THE BLACK BEAR AND THE WHITE-TAILED
DEER ON THE TRIBAL LIFE OF THE EARLY MENOMINI PEOPLE
Ceremonial Features

BLACK BEAR	WHITE-TAILED DEER
1. Fourth tier of Universe Beneath is ruled by Great White Bear, with copper tail. Black Bear earthly delegate.	1. Second tier below the Earth is ruled by the White Deer. Skinner (1913, 81)
Skinner (1921, 30-31)	
2. Office of tribal chief was hereditary in principal family of great mythical bear gens, members of which are traditional lineal descendants of the Great Bear.	2. White Deer, fleetest animal of the Underneath Powers, played a prominent part in the origin myth of the Mitawin Dance.
Skinner (1921, 51)	Skinner (1920, 24-83)

BLACK BEAR

3. An Indian of the bear gens may address a living bear as brother.

Skinner (1921, 47)

4. Bear ceremony followed killing of bear in ancient days, dictated customs associated with preparation and eating of bears for food. The great hunting bundle, Misasakiwis, contained a medicine for bear.

Skinner (1915, 213)

5. Bear bundle was feasted when bear was killed.

Skinner (1913, 153-154)

6. Bear man may kill a bear, but must first apologize to it for depriving it of life. He can eat only paws and head. Bones must be deposited in running water. Skull must be hung up in a "clean" place in the woods.

Skinner (1921, 76)

Skinner (1913, 21)

7. Father-in-law of a hunter may share the bear his son-in-law kills. Father-in-law must skin the animal and is entitled to the hide, one side, the head and neck.

Skinner (1921, 181)

8. Puberty dreams commonly concerned bear or buffalo.

Skinner (1913, 45)

9. Witches had medicine bags and bundles of bear paws or entire skin, which were used in rites of the Witches Society.

Skinner (1915, 182-185)

10. White Bear is believed to be imprisoned behind Bear Trap Falls; other bears believed to be in springs and lakes on the reservation.

Brown (1938, 118)¹

11. White Bear spirit is supposed to guard the deposits of native copper of Lake Superior.

Mallory (1888, 481)²

WHITE-TAILED DEER

4. Hunting bundle ceremonies dictated certain procedures to be followed before certain parts of the deer carcass could be used for food. Misasakiwis, the great hunting bundle, had a medicine for deer.

Skinner (1913, 131-140)

5. Hunting bundle feasted when deer was killed.

Skinner (1913, 139)

6. No taboos concerning the cooking of venison are to be found.

Skinner (1921, 194)

7. Slayer of a deer is entitled to head, shoulders, brisket, lungs, heart and back, but must give hide and portion of meat to any person who passes by. The recipient must skin and cut up the deer.

Skinner (1921, 181)

9. Skins of unborn lawns are delicate and require much care in their preparation. They are used as the inner wrappers for bundles and other sacred articles.

Skinner (1921, 229)

12. November is known as the deer-rutting moon.

Skinner (1913, 62)

¹ Brown, Dorothy Moulding. "Waterfalls of the Wolf River," *Wisconsin Archaeologist*, N. S., XVIII, no. 4 (Milwaukee, July, 1938), 116-119.

² Mallory, Garrick, "Picture Writing of American Indians," *Tenth Annual Report of Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institute*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888-1889), 481, 521, 522.

One hundred fifty-three myths have been examined. One hundred thirty-four are those collected by Skinner and Satterlee, 1915, Table IV. Eleven others came from the collection of Hoffman, 1896, which were briefed by Skinner and Satterlee (1915, 541-543) and listed by them as myths collected by Hoffman, but not by Skinner and Satterlee. The remaining eight myths come from other works of Skinner, and include the tribal-origin myth, the Mitawin myths, hunting bundle myths, and cosmological myth, Table IV shows the number of myths containing materials on bear, forty-two, or 27 percent out of one hundred fifty-three; and on deer, thirty-three, or 22 percent. Eighteen, or 12 percent, of these contained materials on both animals.

Tables V and VI are arrangements of these mythological materials on bear and deer into some sort of logical, but very general, outline. First, one notes that the number of references to bear exceeds those to deer, one hundred twenty-two to seventy-five. Each animal's references were then divided into supernatural and natural. In the bear there are sixty-four supernatural and fifty-eight natural, or 52 percent and 48 percent. In the case of the deer, twenty-nine supernatural and forty-six natural references, or 39 percent and 61 percent of the total of seventy-five references on the bear. Thus, in general, the same relative status of the two animals seems to be maintained. Perhaps folklore does emphasize the more spectacular and colorful aspects of aboriginal living. The black bear was so worshiped that even such minor matters as its liking of acorns, blueberries, and maple sugar are mentioned, while very little is said about the food habits of the deer. This may account, in part, for the great difference in

TABLE III
MENOMINI USES OF BLACK BEAR AND WHITE-TAILED DEER

Parts of Animal Used	Number of Uses Found	
	Black Bear	White-Tailed Deer
1. Meat as food	5	19
2. Skin	4	39
3. Bone	3	11
4. Claws, hoofs, and dew claws	2	6
5. Antlers		10
6. Sinews		8
7. Hair		7
8. Fat	3	
9. Brains	1	3
10. Paunch		1
11. Tails		2
12. Gall	1	
13. Liver	1	1
14. Bladder	2	1
15. Urine	1	
Total	23	108

total number of references on the bear and the deer. In both bear and deer, contests and hunting customs rank first and second in number of references of supernatural type. Among the natural references, hunting customs and animals used as food rank first and second with both bear and deer.

Skinner listed twelve popular types of action belonging to Menomoni folklore and widely distributed, at least among Central Algonkin. They are Animal Foster Parents, Animal Husband or Wife, The Contest Motive, Violation of a Taboo, Sunshover, Bead-spitter, Monster and Thunder Contest, Sacred Dreamer, Monster Killer, Vengeance Motive, Sky Lover and Imposter and Imposter Test. Only one is completely missing from myths concerning both bear and deer, the Sky Lover. In myths concerning bear, Animal Foster Parents and Bead-spitter are absent; in the deer, Animal mates, Sun-shover, Monster and Thunderer, Sacred Dreamer and Imposter are missing.

The stereotyped properties and tools common to the Menomoni and Lake Algonkin tribes are listed by Skinner (1915, 225) as The Magic Canoe, The Inexhaustible Kettle, The Automatic Kettle, The Miraculous Pipe, Fire Arrow, The Singing Snowshoes, Bird Earrings,

TABLE IV

List of Myths	Total	Bear	Deer	Both	Nel-ther	
I. Tales of Culture Hero						
Skinner and Satterlee (1915, 239-304)	25	6	5	3	17	
Hoffman (1896, 165-181)	3	3	1	1	0	
Skinner (1920, 24-83, 163-174) (Mitawin Myths)	3	2	1	1	1	
Skinner (1913, 132-146, 155-157) (Hunting Bundle Myths)	3	2	3	2	0	
Skinner (1913, 8-10) (Tribal Origin Myth)	1	1	1	1		35
II. Fairy Tales						
Skinner and Satterlee, (1915, 305-433)	42	13	13	6	22	
Hoffman (1896, 209-211, 213-214, 223-238)	7	3	1	1	4	49
III. True Stories						
Skinner and Satterlee, (1915, 434-498)	62	11	7	2	46	
Hoffman (1896, 214-216)	1				1	63
IV. Tales of European Origin						
Skinner and Satterlee, (1915, 499-517)	5				5	5
V. Tribal Cosmology						
Skinner (1913, 73-85)						
Skinner (1921, 24-37)	1	1	1	1		1
Totals	153	42	33	18	96	153
Percentages		27	22	12	63	

The Animal Head Ball and the Mummified Dog. Among the materials concerning bear, nothing is found regarding Automatic Kettle, or the Animal Head Ball. In materials concerned with deer, only the Inexhaustible Kettle was found.

Among the retroactive influences of folklore on social life, Skinner listed the following: joking relationship, use of ordinal names, origin of expressions still common today, (namely, "wolf-legged"), use of expressions peculiar to women, menstrual segregation, gathering basswood bark by groups of women, marriage customs, messenger's call, the use of sweat bath for purification, etiquette on entering a lodge, and the reception and entertainment of visitors. Among materials concerned with bear are found joking relationship, use of ordinal names, love-making customs, and etiquette for entering lodge, etc. Among materials concerned with deer, origin of "wolf-legged," menstrual segregation, marriage customs, sweat bath for purification, love-making customs, and etiquette for entering a lodge, occur. In conclusion, more of these popular types of action, stereotyped properties and tools, and retroactive influences of folklore and social life occur in materials dealing with bear than in those dealing with deer.

Interesting survivals are references to animals now nearly or wholly disappeared within the range of these Indians. Such are the moose, the elk, the caribou, the buffalo, and the fisher. Skinner and Satterlee (1915, 227) relate that the caribou was probably found far from even the ancient territories of the Menomini, and their knowledge of it, as seen in folklore, may be a clue to war, exploring, or trading parties. In this connection, it is interesting to note the following statement by Cory (1912, 81).

There is no reason to doubt the occurrence of the Woodland caribou in the early days in Northern Wisconsin; but at the present time, if it occurs at all, it must be considered as an exceedingly rare straggler.

The animals mentioned in the one hundred fifty-three legends include the following: *Mammals*: dog, fox, wolf, raccoon, black bear, mink, martin, skunk, otter, fisher, lynx, wild cat, panther, rabbit, red squirrel, woodchuck chipmunk, beaver, muskrat, mouse, porcupine, white-tailed deer, moose, elk, caribou, buffalo and whale. *Birds*: loons bitterns, wood duck, crane, buzzard, chicken hawk, golden eagle, wild turkey, partridge, barred owl, horned owl, long-eared owl screech owl, whippoorwill, woodpecker, robin, raven, bluejay, Canada jay, chickadee, martin. *Other animals*: turtles, snake, frogs, toads catfish, pike, pickerel, sturgeon, grasshopper, dung beetles, louse and crayfish. Sixty animals in all! — an amazingly long list to be found in a col-

lection of myths, a type of literature usually considered far removed from the realms of zoology.

TABLE V

References to Myths Concerning Black Bear	Reference and page numbers					
	Total	Skinner and Satterlee, 1915	Hoff- man, 1896	Skinner, 1913	Skinner, 1920	Skinner, 1921
A. Supernatural						
1. Great White Bear— ruler of fourth tier of Universe Beneath	4	256		8	28	31
2. Servants of Great White Bear	6	328, 455	177	9, 9		31
3. Puberty dreams	3	486, 455, 493				
4. Contests	16	256, 454, 455, 319, 327, 330, 331, 369, 408, 358, 310, 275, 381	177 196		28	
5. Bear mates	2	329	175			
Bear husband	3	329, 378, 381				
Bear wife	4	251, 295, 305, 364				
Bear paramour						
6. Bears found in lakes and streams	5	358, 454	234			
7. Hunting customs	9	252, 305, 450 395, 477, 331	177	135 155		
8. Bears as food	2	381, 365				
9. Bearskins	5	262, 463, 464		51	62	
10. Miscellaneous references	5	296, 325, 410, 494	173			
	64					
B. Not supernatural						
1. Hunting customs						
a. Killed with bows and arrows	6	252, 261, 319 295, 358	176			
b. Killed by clubbing	1	335				
c. Killed, no weapons listed	8	254, 325, 327, 373, 374, 378, 331	210			
d. Division of meat	2	253, 296				
e. Skinned, flayed and cut up bear	7	253, 261, 295, 358, 325, 359	177			
f. Miscellaneous	2	358, 358				
	26					

There is much room for a thorough study of material culture as it is evidenced in tribal myths. Much information about the very old Menomini is to be elicited, if one examines the myths carefully with that idea in mind, and many questions come to mind as one reads. In "Lodge Boy and Thrown Away," Skinner and Satterlee (1915, 337-343), the references to shirt, leggings, cap and moccasins being made of woven deer hair, take one back to references of woven buffalo-hair sashes and bags, very, very early in Menomini history. I can find no other reference to deer hair being woven into fabric by the Menomini. This is something to follow up in other Algonkin legends and material culture. Among many other references to matters of material culture are the following regarding food and its preparation: boiling of acorns with lye to burst their coats, 252; splitting of bones to obtain marrow, 296; roasting, drying and preserving of meat, 278, 478; hulling dry corn with lye made from ashes of elm trees, had an ash-making place, 401; methods of butchering and cutting up meat, 253, 296. A few references with regard to clothing are also noted. Weaving of yarn sashes, 322; buckskin shirt and leggings, 340; buckskin garters ornamented with quill embroidery, 335. (Page numbers refer to Skinner and Satterlee, 1915).

TABLE V (continued)

References to Myths Concerning Black Bear	Total	Skinner and Satterlee, 1915	Hoff- man, 1896	Skinner, 1913	Skinner, 1920	Skinner, 1921
2. Bears used as Food						
a. Fat	3	295, 330, 330				
b. Liver	2	330, 330				
c. Bear head	2	263, 319				
d. Cub eaten	1	335				
e. Gut	1	373				
f. General, no portion mentioned	8	262, 331, 335, 358, 359, 486, 261	177			
	17					
3. Other uses of bear	2	307, 341				
4. Habits of the bear	8	451, 252, 295, 394, 494, 493, 487	199			
5. Kinds and colors of bears	5	262, 330, 378, 454	169			
	15					
Grand Total	122					

CONCLUSIONS

1. The relative position of black bear and the white-tailed deer in Menomini mythology seems about the same as that found in material culture. Perhaps the myths accentuate the differences a bit more, even more emphasis on the ceremonial and ritualistic in

TABLE VI

References to Myths Concerning White-Tailed Deer	Total	Reference and page numbers				
		Skinner and Satterlee, 1915	Hoff- man, 1896	Skinner, 1913	Skinner, 1920	Skinner, 1921
A. Supernatural						
1. White Underground Deer ruler of the second tier below the earth	5	256		156 81	30	31
2. Servant of White Deer	1			81		
3. Contests	8	274, 372, 396, 411, 411	167 198		29	
4. Hunting customs	11	314, 372, 377, 428, 437, 469, 476		135 142 155	27	
5. Deer as food	2	300, 459				
6. Deerskins	2	265	167			
	29					
B. Not supernatural						
1. Hunting customs						
a. Methods of killing						
1) Stabbing	1	396				
2) Clubbing	1	370				
3) Bow and arrow	3	307, 314, 370				
4) Uncertain, but deer killed, skinned, dressed and butchered	8	254, 376, 377, 438, 440, 444, 463, 470				
b. Miscellaneous customs	6	314, 371, 377, 439, 314, 463				
	19					
2. Deer used as food						
a. Liver	2	330, 400				
b. Bones split for marrow	1	296				
c. Broth	2	371, 463				
d. Briskets, sides, and back fat	1	314				
e. General, no parts mentioned	6	255, 300, 368, 371, 377, 462				
f. Miscellaneous cooking customs	2	371, 478				
	14					

the case of the bear, and even fewer references on the deer and its uses than in material culture. Perhaps it is a case of the taking for granted of common everyday objects, because they are so common.

2. Of Skinner's thirteen popular types of action, nine stereotyped properties and tools, and eleven retroactive influences of folklore on social life, more examples are to be found among the myths concerning bear than those concerning deer.
3. References to animals now extinct within the range of the tribe may help to indicate early tribal locations now forgotten, or may be of help in determination of early range of various animals.
4. Menomini myths are exceedingly rich in numbers of kinds of animals listed. Such a list might predicate much to the trained zoologist, entomologist, or ornithologist, in terms of distribution and range.
5. A careful study of the activities and materials of aboriginal mythology might provide many a clue to the careful scientist attempting to push back ever farther into the realms of aboriginal prehistory.

It seems entirely within the realm of possibilities, through diligent research into tribal myths, hand in hand with a thorough study of material culture, to greatly enrich and, perhaps, further reconstruct the prehistorical material culture of some of our North American aborigines.

TABLE VI (continued)

References to Myths Concerning White-Tailed Deer		Reference and page numbers				
	Total	Skinner and Satterlee, 1915	Hoff- man, 1896	Skin- ner, 1913	Skin- ner, 1920	Skin- ner, 1921
3. Other uses of the deer						
a. Deerskin	4	335, 339	198	142		
b. Deer hair	1	340				
c. Hoofs	2	263, 397				
d. Stomach and tripe	3	409, 439, 431				
e. Bladder	1	431				
f. Antlers	1	410				
g. Waste from butchering	1	337				
	13					
Total for Deer	75					

The writer wishes here to pay tribute to the memory of John Valentine Satterlee, co-author with Alanson Skinner of *Folklore of the Menomini Indians*. During the late summer of 1939, Mr. Satterlee and his two sons went with the writer to visit some of the older members of the tribe in the Zoar district. Many of these people do not speak English, and Uncle John and his son Joe interpreted for the writer. It was a day to be remembered, hunting around tumbledown grave boxes for the grave of Chief Niatawapomy, visiting a lumber camp in the reservation, and watching Mrs. Shopatock making beaded moccasins in her bark arbor. The writer treasures every bit of information Uncle John Satterlee gave her, as does every other student of the Menomini who had any dealings with the kindly old gentleman, 87 years old in 1939. He died during the winter of 1939-40, but Skinner's wish for him must have come true, for he, in the words of the Menomini traditions, must have "lived to see the gray hairs of his children's children." Skinner (November, 1920, 213). Probably the photographs taken that summer of Satterlee, and the interviews during the summer of 1939 were among the last records left by John Valentine Satterlee.

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The Chicago Folklore Prize of \$50.00 was awarded at the June Convocation of the University of Chicago to Mr. John A. Hostetler, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pennsylvania, for his work *Annotated Bibliography on the Amish: An Annotated Bibliography of Source Materials Pertaining to the Old Order Amish Mennonites*. Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1951.

Book Reviews

We Always Lie to Strangers: Tall Tales from the Ozarks. Vance Randolph. Illustrated by Glen Rounds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951). viii + 309 pp.

Vance Randolph, the indefatigable recorder of Ozark folksongs, has set down in *We Always Lie to Strangers* tall tales by the hundred, gathered in the mountainy country of Arkansas and Missouri whose folkways he knows better than any man in America. Mr. Randolph has not produced an academic study of comparative versions and motif provenance; rather he has tried to capture the spirit of the stories and the tones of voice of the men who tell them. In this he is eminently successful. Reading this book is the next thing to being at Vance Randolph's side as he pretends, to loungers around a courthouse only forty miles from his own home town, that he is a gullible outlander from Chicago. At once the tricky, deceptively casual folk-art of humorous yarning begins.

About this art Randolph has some perceptive things to say. "It is a mistake to assume that backwoods humor is merely a matter of grotesque exaggeration. The Ozark story-teller appreciates understatement also, and knows more of irony than many sophisticated comedians." The best of the stories, he remarks, are "humorous, rather than comic or witty. They move slowly and aimlessly and are told with a kind of deadpan zest, just as the traditional ballads are sung." (Pp. 6, 11.) While the origin of ballads is no longer believed to be communal, however great a part communal sanction may play in their transmission and change, the case is somewhat different with the type of narrative presented here. "The best story-tellers work in groups, and their smooth team-play is fascinating to witness. The chief narrator speaks slowly to a picked group of listeners, who know exactly when to put the proper questions and when to hold their peace." (p. 7.) Such yarning is in the Ozarks a deliberate accomplishment, and clubs used to meet to work up elaborate stories and practical jokes.

The yarns in this book are for the most part tall tales only; Mr. Randolph is saving his longer folktales for three later collections. The themes of the tall tales deal almost exclusively with the natural environment which differentiates life in the backwoods from other modes of living. After the introductory essay on how the tales are told, Randolph gives a chapter apiece to stories of "Steep Hills and Razor-backs"; "Fabulous Monsters"; "Rich Soil and Big Vegetables"; "Hunting Yarns"; "Snakes and Other Varmints"; "Backwoods Supermen"; "High Wind and Funny Weather"; "Fish Stories"; and a final catch-

all chapter containing some of the very best yarns in the whole collection. There is also a twenty-two page critical bibliography giving citations from local newspapers, national magazines, regional histories, long-forgotten travel books, and all sorts of obscure publications. It appears to be the most definitive survey of Ozark tall tales now in print, and will be an essential finding-list for further folklore scholarship on the humorous tradition of the American frontier.

Only one thing keeps *We Always Lie to Strangers* from being a folktale Bible, and that is—despite its fine bibliography—inadequate documentation. True, Mr. Randolph does cite all references to printed sources, and he gives the place if not the informant's name where each tale was collected orally. But all too often the dates are missing. One cannot call Randolph's collecting "fieldwork," since that academic term does not apply to the labors of a man who loves to hear his neighbors' imaginations at work; but Mr. Randolph has been listening and jotting down for almost a third of a century, and it can make a great difference to other folklorists using his book whether he heard a certain story at the beginning of his sojourn in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, or in 1949. For example, I find in this book at least eleven motifs, included as typical Ozark humor, which I had encountered before in investigating the Paul Bunyan yarns in oral tradition. As Bunyan motifs they were collected between 1910 and 1938 on the West Coast and in Michigan. But here they are, completely independent of Paul Bunyan. We know how some of them were spread, in advertising brochures, in books, in newspapers columns; but much as one would like to know *when* Mr. Randolph found them in the Ozarks, there is no way to tell whether they originated there, or were first introduced after the boom of Bunyan publicity got under way.¹

A third possibility of course is that such motifs are found wherever frontier conditions exist. Indeed, the reader familiar with the folklore of other regions will find many yarns here that he has seen before. For the last century and a half the tall tales told on the American frontier have roughly conformed to the types presented in this book, a circumstance which finds parallels in the literary culture

¹ The motifs are these: colossal cornstalk (p. 81); clinching mosquito bills (p. 147); big mosquitoes (p. 149); crossbreeding mosquitos and hawks (p. 150); selling post-holes (p. 163); man toting iron sinks in solid rock (p. 168)—here he sinks beside a blacksmith shop; W. B. Laughead told this about Paul Bunyan's blacksmith, Big Ole; the year of the blue snow (p. 197); frozen blazes and frozen coffee (p. 199); felling a big tree (p. 248); and the shrinking rawhide harness (p. 256). The provenience of these motifs in the Bunyan tradition is discussed in my *Paul Bunyan, Last of the Frontier Demigods* (Philadelphia, 1952).

of the frontier and suggests the advisability of studying the frontier as a cultural level in space and time rather than limiting it arbitrarily to region or era. Particularly in the case of folklore is a flexible approach advisable, an approach which recognizes the genuineness of folk materials in printed sources of the past and can detect spurious materials which may have been culled from oral tradition in the present. Like Mody Boatright in *Folk Laughter on the American Frontier*, Mr. Randolph skilfully combines the fruits of his reading with those of his collecting, and in giving us tales from a professional hillbilly comedian like Bob Burns he is knowing enough to select only what is relevant to his purpose.

As Mr. Randolph observes, these yarns are by nature fragmentary, depending often for their form as well as their impetus upon the wayward improvisations of skilled raconteurs who casually play the listener along. The value of such a limited *genre* in displaying the qualities of frontier folk imagination and humor is greater than one might suppose. Yet despite the consistently high level of yarning displayed by the author, one misses that sense of variety and fulfillment which comes when comic materials are grouped into more complex forms than the single jest. The opportunity for such organization comes when the free-floating motifs gather in clusters about the exploits of local heroes. But the chapter on "Backwoods Supermen" is a disappointment. (Perhaps Mr. Randolph is saving his best stories for later collections.) His account of Ab Yancey's beehunting (pp. 349-350), however, is reminiscent in style and humor of the best writings of an earlier Ozark bee-hunter, Thomas Bangs Thorpe.²

In praising Mr. Randolph's diligence and taste as a collector I should not wish to slight his abilities as a writer. Nothing fails more miserably than a badly told joke, and there isn't one of those among the hundreds he passes on. His success is won by literary skill as well as fidelity to good texts. One word can make a world of difference:

... I asked an old gentleman at the Basin Park Hotel if he knew any local ghost stories. After some thought he replied in the negative. "There's ghosts in Texas, an' maybe in Oklahoma," he said soberly, "but not here." I waited for awhile without any comment. "This country is just naturally too rough for ghosts," he added gently.

² Randolph cites Thorpe wherever appropriate, but the fragmentariness of the tall tales in this book leads Randolph to refer to the individual motifs of Thorpe's masterpiece, "The Big Bear of Arkansas," without ever mentioning the ways that Thorpe combined the tall tales into a unified narrative.

That last qualifying adverb, Mr. Randolph's own, lets us feel what he felt.

Despite the sketchy documentation, which will annoy scholarly readers without interfering with their enjoyment, *We Always Lie to Strangers* is a thorough and dependable guide to the living traditions of backwoods humor. Mark Twain incorporated yarns like these into his rambling masterpieces; Mr. Randolph proves that the old traditions are vital yet. As he and Herbert Halpert are to document the longer Ozark tales, we can anticipate volumes that will be even more definitive than this one, and just as entertaining.

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Daniel G. Hoffman

Songs of the Chippewa. Edited by Frances Densmore. Album XXII or Long-Playing Record L22. (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, Music Division Recording Laboratory, 1951).

This recording, *Songs of the Chippewa*, from the Archives of American Folk Song edited by Frances Densmore, contains thirty songs of the Chippewa Indians. It is a welcome addition to the growing library of primitive music recordings which are being made generally available.

The recordings were made by Frances Densmore, noted collector and author in the field of North American Indian music. Along with the record, Miss Densmore has supplied a booklet which contains a detailed description of the songs, some valuable ethnological background information, but unfortunately little musical analysis or stylistic description. Compared to other generally available collections, the recordings are unusual in several respects. They were made originally in the years 1907-1910, in the early days of field recording; thus, some of the songs were sung by aged individuals who learned them at a time when Western civilization had as yet made little of an impression on Chippewa culture. The early date of this collection (on cylinders) gives the songs an especially authentic quality, but it makes inevitable the somewhat distorted quality of some of the recordings. The following songs, however, are especially good in tone quality and lend themselves best to demonstration: on side A, numbers 1, 5, 9, and 14; on side B, numbers 3 and 8. It should be stated that the recording quality of these songs compares favorably with that of most field recordings of that time.

It is fortunate that the transcriptions into musical notation of all of the songs have been published by Miss Densmore in Bulletins 45 and 53 of the Bureau of American Ethnology. These publications are now accompanied by concrete musical examples, a fact which will considerably aid the student of Indian music. For him it is very desirable to have available recordings whose transcriptions are published.

Finally, it should be mentioned that four songs (numbers 12-15 on side B) are sung by women; this, again, is fortunate because most recordings of Indian music are sung by men. A number of love songs, whose musical style differs considerably from that of the other songs, are also included. Miss Densmore and the Library of Congress are to be congratulated and thanked for this fine contribution.

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Bruno Nettl

Another Sheaf of White Spirituals. George Pullen Jackson. (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1952). xviii and 233 pp.

George Pullen Jackson's latest contribution to the study of the White Spiritual is an attempt to complete the corpus of published examples of this form. *Another Sheaf*, which contains 363 tunes and texts, taken together with Dr. Jackson's other printed collections makes a grand total of over nine hundred tunes and nearly as many texts. Dr. Jackson's labors in making this great mass of carefully edited material available cannot be too highly praised.

In an admirably brief introduction, which includes a helpful map, Dr. Jackson, in *Another Sheaf*, outlines the historic background of White Spirituals. At the present day, Jackson's map shows, the singing of these robust old tunes is confined to an area in the Deep South including portions of eight states plus a small "pool" in western Kentucky. In the past, however, White Spirituals flourished mightily, spreading from the New England area to which they were confined in 1800 until, at their high-water mark, they covered a large part of the eastern United States. Dr. Jackson also helps to clarify the problem of "tune-family" nomenclature by showing the relationship between some families that he has previously named and some that S. P. Bayard has treated. He says, for instance, "My Babe of Bethlehem family is identical with the Bayard-Barry Lazarus group" (p. xvii).

The songs presented in *Another Sheaf* can be divided into three categories as regards their source. Some, most of which are in Jackson's Group One, were recorded from oral tradition by Dr. Jackson, S. P. Bayard, and others, and are here printed for the first time. Another category is composed of songs reprinted from reliable collections of the last few decades such as McDowell's *Songs of the Old Camp Ground* and Chappell's *Folk-Songs of Roanoke and the Albermarle*. Dr. Jackson devotes his eighth section to reprinting a few White Spirituals of American origin which were collected in England by Anne Gilchrist. The third and largest category is made up of songs gathered from various early and mid-nineteenth century religious songbooks, such as the *Social Harp* of 1855 and the *Revivalist* of 1868. In several cases Dr. Jackson has been able to emend judiciously the faulty notation of these nineteenth century songbooks. He has, however, emended only when he has had evidence either from the way the song is sung at the present day or from other printed versions.

All of the songs, regardless of their source, are accompanied by extensive notes by Dr. Jackson and S. P. Bayard. Especially detailed are the convincing parallels drawn between the melodies of these spirituals and the tunes of secular folksongs. Not quite so much attention, however, is devoted to the texts. No mention is made, for instance, of the fact that the text for "Old-Fashioned Bible," no. 126, which closes

The old-fashion'd Bible, the dear blessed Bible,
The family Bible that lay on the stand,

is probably an imitation of Woodworth's "The Old Oaken Bucket." Dr. Jackson's "Hark from the Tombs," no. 36, must have been a very popular song during the nineteenth century. A version of it is presented as a Negro Spiritual in E. A. Meriwether's *Black and White* (New York: 1883) and reprinted from that source in K. Knortz's *Streifzüge auf dem Gebiete Amerikanischer Volkskunde* (p. 246). Two lines from the same song are also given in a selection reprinted in Botkin's *Treasury of American Folklore* (p. 142).

Finally, the University of Florida Press has supplied an attractive format for the book and Dr. Jackson must be congratulated on the delightful drawings he provided to further enliven his thoroughly interesting and carefully edited volume.

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Dunnybrook. Gladys Hasty Carroll. (New York: Macmillan, revised edition, 1952). 390 pp.

This book, which was first published in 1943, is listed under "Folk Literature" in the bibliographical volume of the *Literary History of the United States* (edited by Spiller, Thorp, Johnson, Canby and others: Macmillan, 1948). It appears (p. 194) among "Specific Studies and Collections" of New England and North Atlantic Seaboard folk songs and ballads. The new edition of *Dunnybrook* stirs an investigation of it; one expects, from the listing above, a treatment of New England folk song with which the conscientious folklorist should be familiar.

This is a classic instance of how misleading a bibliography can be. *Dunnybrook* is not a study and not a collection, and its only song is a text (44 lines, pp. 200-201 and a fragment, p. 356), of "Young Charlotte," a native American ballad which went into oral tradition in the United States about the middle of the nineteenth century. This one text, obviously an abridged version of the usually lengthy ballad, hardly justifies the inclusion of *Dunnybrook* in a selected bibliography of studies and collections of songs and ballads.

The bibliographer comments that *Dunnybrook* suggests "the importance of folklore in the lives of New Englanders." This notation also, though not a downright untruth, somehow promises more than one finds. The book is not, except in a superficial way, social history; certainly it is not folk history. It accomplishes exactly what its author intended: the factual history (with certain episodes treated as fiction) of one group of Maine families from their American beginnings to the present. Its contribution to the literature of folklore is negligible.

There are a number of references to "yarning" as a pastime, and several of the men and women are said to be renowned as storytellers; but the stories in the book, with two or three minor exceptions, are historical and biographical reminiscences rather than folk tales or legends. Two tales (pp. 303-305) about Jed—"an honest tricker, for he told of every trick as soon as it had worked"—are in the traditional pattern of Yankee literal trickery, verbally emphasized. One involves the sale of wooden eggs to a dealer who had previously complained of frozen eggs; the other involves delivering a turkey which weighs the required twenty pounds thanks to the inclusion of an extra dozen gizzards.

One children's game, "Come, Philander," is mentioned by name when an old man remembers his childhood (p. 272). Traditional foods are frequently named and occasionally described, but only Train-

ing Day Gingerbread (p. 54) calls forth an explanation of its preparation and its importance as an adjunct of the holiday. The book overflows with the local dialect, which one assumes that Mrs. Carroll, from long familiarity, handles accurately.

Only two incidents, I think, are genuinely suggestive of the importance of folk tradition to the people who perpetuate it. When her husband has gone to the Civil War and one daughter has gone no one knows where, Lydia Brown sings with great feeling the ballad of Young Charlotte, whose vanity ("To ride in blankets muffled up I never would be seen") causes her to freeze to death on a long sleigh-ride into town. When her second daughter laughs and says, "You know it never happened. . . . You know yourself it's a silly song," Lydia is hurt. By the time the daughter is middle-aged, with children of her own, the laughter is gone; "Young Charlotte" has become "a great favorite" with her and she has only appreciative words for the singing of it by a neighbor's child.

And Joanna Hasty, of another generation, asks a relative to take a cushion filled with wild-fowl feathers from beneath her dying husband's head (p. 293). When he dies, only moments after its removal, she says, "I've always heard 'em say can't nobody go, long as wild-fowl feathers is anywhere about. So I tucked my little cushion under his head last night when he got so bad. Seemed as if I *had* to. . . . But I never ought to done such a thing."

Murray, Kentucky

Violetta Halpert

Jean Ritchie Sings. Produced by Jac Holzman. Long-Playing Record Elektra JH-505. (New York: Elektra Records, A Division of the Elektra-Stratford Record Corporation, 1952.) Two sides; 16 songs.

As an avid collector of recordings of folk music, I have long since learned that the world is divided into two classes of people: those who react to the playing of folksong records much as a normally intelligent human being reacts to an amateur movie of "Baby's First Christmas" and those who do not break into irrelevant conversation the moment the needle is lifted from the record. This collection of songs by Jean Ritchie will dismay the former and please the latter. And this is, perhaps, another way of saying that *Jean Ritchie Sings* is a record for the folklorist rather than for the layman.

Technically the recording is excellent. In fact the record combines the good qualities of most commercial recordings with the good qualities of the better of the Library of Congress recordings of Ameri-

can and Anglo-American folk music. More than anything else, *Jean Ritchie Sings* reminds me of the Library of Congress recording (LC 7) of Mrs. Texas Gladden singing "The Four Marys," to my mind the best folksong record ever produced. Very probably a musician, or even a layman, skilled in the subtleties of harmony and orchestration would not like either record, but a person who has been brought up with, or educated to, folk music will recognize in both of these records the authenticity of a traditional way of singing traditional music.

As a purist in my definition of *folksong*, I find it difficult to accept many of the songs which Miss Ritchie sings on this record, but in their defense it must be pointed out that it was to Miss Ritchie's family that Cecil Sharp turned for many of the songs which he collected in 1916 and that most of these songs were traditional in her family (the exceptions are noted on the back of the record envelope). Perhaps the best comment on the songs included would be a list of the titles: Side 1, *O Love is Teasin'*, *Jubilee*, *Black is the Color*, *A Short Life of Trouble* (a parody of hilly-billy music), *One Morning in May* (*The Nightingale* or *The Bold Soldier* or *Soldier, Soldier Won't You Marry Me*) two versions, *Old Virginny*, and *Skin and Bones*; Side 2: *The Little Devils* (*The Farmer's Curst Wife* [Child 278]), *My Boy Willie* (*Billy Boy*), *Hush Little Baby*, *Gypsum Davy* (Child 200), *The Cuckoo*, two versions, *Little Cory*, *Keep Your Garden Clean* (*The Seeds of Love*).

The Elektra-Stratford Record Corporation is to be commended for producing this record; they will gain the thanks of folklorists throughout the English speaking world if they can continue their excellent work.

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W. Edson Richmond

Midwest Folklore

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